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KASHMIR: History and Archaeology Through the Ages

S.L. SHALI

INDUS PUBLISHING COMPANY
NEW DELHI

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Dedicated to my parents
who did not live long to see the
fruits of my hard labour

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Abbreviations

AMU	—Aligarh Muslim University.
AP	—Ancient Pakistan.
ARM	—Archaeology, Research and Museum.
ASI	—Archaeological Survey of India.
ASS	—Anandashrama Sanskrit Series.
BARC	—Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Srinagar.
CA	—Central Asia.
CCAS	—Centre of Central Asian Studies.
CSCCA	—Centre for the Study of the Civilization of Central Asia.
GOI	—Government of India.
GSI	—Geological Survey of India.
ICCR	—Indian Council for Cultural Relations.
IHC	—Indian Historical Congress.
JASB	—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JBBRAS	—Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JKAACL	—Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages.
JRAS	—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
KSTS	—Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies.
KU	—Kashmir University.
MS	—Manuscript.
RP	—Research and Publication.
SPS	—Sri Pratap Singh.

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DR (SMT) NAJMA HEPTULLA

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN
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NEW DELHI

Foreword

The name Kashmir at once brings to the mind the vision of a picturesque valley nestled deep in the Himalayas. Standing majestically in its mountain isolation, Kashmir has been the crucible for refining human thought, be it the Vaishnav cult, Shavism, Buddhism or Sufism. While emphasising the essential unity of the ultimate reality, Kashmir has also recognised the existence of various paths to reach the absolute truth. Its immense contribution to Buddhism, for example, is well-known. The Mahayana cult of Buddhism that found its birth in the vale of Kashmir was a logical sequence to the search for the ultimate unity. The masterly blending of the Vedic thought with that of the 'Great Master' has brought about a fantastic synthesis. In keeping with its traditions of tolerance, harmony and humaneness, Kashmir welcomed all fugitives and provided a new home for them.

Kashmir has the distinction of having the oldest written historical record. It has also been rich in legends that have gone back in the hoary past. However, in the pre-independence era not much seemed to have been done to unearth the rich cultural and historical past. Archaeology is the mid-wife to historical facts. It was only in the early sixties that serious attempts were made by the Archaeological Survey of India to dig out the rich heritage of Kashmir. Such excavations at Burzahom (district Srinagar), Gufkral (district Pulwama) and at Semthan (district Anantnag) have unmistakably pointed to the glorious periods in Kashmir's history dating back to early historic and pre-historic periods. Fascinating and interesting structural phases, stones and bone tools of the neolithic period have been discovered suggesting that Kashmir was after all not all that isolated. The discovery of these new sites have provided the much sought link between the pre-historical

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period and the medieval times.

It is a matter of happiness to know that in recent years palaeoclimatic survey on multi-disciplinary lines has led to the witnessing of climatic and environmental trends in Kashmir right through last four million years. Stone-age tools, ascribable to the upper palaeolithic traditions as also other factors have pointed to the climatic amelioration during 20,000-18,000 B.P.

Mr. S.L. Shali's book, ''Kashmir: History and Archaeology Through the Ages,'' has set into motion a new journey, not only into the rich past of Kashmir but to that of humankind as a whole. His long experience of and association with the techniques of exploration have stood him in good stead to help fill up the important gaps in the story of human existence in this beautiful and culturally rich area of our country.

NAJMA HEPTULLA

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Preface

Kashmir with its hoary past and bewitching beauty, philosophical intellectualism and mystic spiritualism is a paradise on earth. It has a rich collection of historical, literary and travel records which are interesting in their own right. But the ancient history of the valley is still wrapped in obscurity. This is because of the lack of archaeological research.

Prior to the assumption of charge by Shri R.C. Kak, a trained archaeologist, the attention was focussed only on the collection of surface finds or exposing of temples. However, in 1919-20, he did excavate the Buddhist site at Harwan, but the recent investigations have shown that his finds too were inadequate.

The archaeological research later got a fresh impetus in 1959-60 when Archaeological Survey of India extended its jurisdiction over the state of Jammu and Kashmir. A separate circle was created for promotion of field work and preservation of monuments in the state.

Exploration work was taken up on scientific lines and many new sites were located ranging from neolithic to late medieval periods. Excavations were taken up in right earnest at the already known site of Burzahom in Srinagar district which lasted for over a decade. A chronological sequence of the ancient history of Kashmir was revealed. The settlement pattern, economy and cultural material of the early settlers of the valley were determined. The findings were further confirmed by excavating the newly discovered site of Gufkral in Pulwama district. The excavations at Semthan near Bijibehara town filled up the gap in between the neolithic period and Kushana period. Trial digs were also taken up at Harwan, Ushkur and Martand and the results were quite interesting and thought-provoking.

The Kashmir valley presents an unparalleled climatic and physiographic complexity and extremes. A detailed work on the sedimentary records of Karewa was taken up by Messers De Terra and Paterson in 1935. Scanty evidences of preneolithic period were reported upon. The work was further taken up by Prof. H.D. Sankalia and his team in early seventees. However, it was in 1980 that interdisciplinary work was resumed by Kashmir Palaeoclimatic Project to review the lithostratigraphic and chronological framework of the sediment profile and proxy climatic data. The work lasted for over seven years.

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In the course of these investigations, many more archaeological sites were located. The most attractive part was the projection of pre-neolithic phase which indicated that the neolithic culture in the valley was not abrupt but had its source in the valley itself. Despite these developments, the history of Kashmir archaeology had not received the academic attention it deserved.

It was in the year 1980 that Kashmir University realised the importance of archaeological research and provided funds for establishing an Archaeological and Ecological Unit in the Centre of Central Asian Studies under the directorship of Prof. Maqbool Ahmed. Prof. Rais Ahmed, the then Vice Chancellor of the university patronized it. With the active participation of Prof. D.P. Agrawal of Physical Research Laboratory, the founder-patron of Kashmir Palaeoclimatic Project, the Unit made a steady progress. An Archaeological Repository was set up in the Unit with the financial support obtained from outside agencies. This Repository is an index for understanding the integrated phases of Kashmir history through the ages.

The research has now placed before us a chronological framework of pre-history, proto-history, early history and medieval history of the valley. A need was felt to record all these events in a consolidated form.

Kashmir at the moment is passing through a turmoil. This darkness can be dispelled by projecting our glorious past which symbolises the spirit of communal harmony.

The present book discusses the history and archaeology of Kashmir through the ages, and incorporates the references to the new discoveries made recently, thus giving a new dimension to the study. This book will serve as a guide book for the beginners and as a reference book for the researchers.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply beholden to Prof. D.P. Agrawal, Chairman, Continental Palaeoclimate Studies Area, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad for allowing me to participate in multi-disciplinary investigations of *Kashmir Palaeoclimatic Project* initiated by him during 1980-87 and for rendering valuable assistance and material for preparing my research papers, some of which have been incorporated in the present volume. I am also thankful to Prof. Maqbool Ahmed, Dr. K.N. Pandita, ex-Directors, Dr. B.K. Deambi, Reader, Prof. A.R. Mattoo, present Director, Centre of Central Asian Studies, Kashmir University, Prof. A.Q. Rafiqi, Head of the post-graduate department of History, and Shri Mohd. Yusuf Taing, Director General, Department of Culture, Government of Jammu & Kashmir who all took keen interest in my archaeological pursuits and encouraged me to set up an Archaeological Repository in the Centre of Central Asian Studies of Kashmir University. I am also thankful to Shri J.L. Bhan, Reader, Central Asian Museum, Kashmir University,

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Srinagar for his constant help and cooperation.

I should express my gratitude to Shri R.N. Kaw who took keen interest in the publication of this book. It is because of his initiative that this book could see the light of the day. My thanks are also due to Shri S.S. Saar who provided me the line drawings for reproduction.

Shri R.S. Fonia, Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Jammu and Kashmir Circle, and his staff members deserve my thanks for helping me in one way or the other. I am also thankful to Shri N.K. Maini, IIAS, Shimla for helping me in the technical aspects of the preparation of the typescript.

Some of the photographs were made available to me by National Museum and Archaeological Survey of India for reproduction in this book, for which I am deeply beholden to these prestigious institutions.

It is a matter of pleasure for me to acknowledge my gratitude to Dr. (Mrs. Najma Heptulla) Vice-Chairman, Rajya Sabha, who inspite of her many preoccupations, could find time to write the Foreword to this book.

Lastly I owe my deep sense of gratitude to my affectionate grand-daughter Shanu, who prepared a chart reconstructing the primitive life style of the ancient people in the valley.

S. L. SHALI

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1
Introduction

The Kashmir valley (33° 25' 00" to 34° 39' 30" N and 73° 55' 05" to 75° 36' 30" E) lies towards the north-west of peninsular India. It is surrounded by spectacular ranges of mountains, the Himalayan range to the north and east whereas the Pir Panjal to the south and south-west divides it from the plains. The valley is boat-shaped with its floor lying at an altitude of about 1,560 mts and extends over an area of about 5,200 square kilometres. More than 2,590 square kilometres of the total area is under water. Towards the foot of the Himalayan range lies its deepest part just along the course of river Jhelum. The river Jhelum fed with large number of tributaries has changed the physical features of the land. There has been extensive dissection of Karewa beds, formation of terraces, lowland swampy areas and lakes such as Wular, Manasbal, Anchar, Dal, Haigam, Hokarsar, besides mountainous lakes like Gangabal, Sheshnag, Tarsar and Marsar, Kounsarnag, Alpather, Butapathri, Nilanag, Narannag etc.

1. Historical Background

Despite its geographical isolation, Kashmir has, from ancient times, been a melting pot of nations and cultures. Its magnificent woods, enchanting lakes, rivers, meadows, glorious snow-clad mountains and above all fertile valleys attracted the foreigners to come and settle over here. Trade, religion and other cultural currents followed the ancient routes (prominent ones being Srinagar-Baramulla and Srinagar-Leh) resulting in the migration of nomads of prehistoric periods, Harappans, Mauryans, Shakas, Kushanas, Hunas, Sayyids, Mughals, Sikhs, Dogras etc. In this way, in the valley itself, many empires rose, flourished, decayed and even disappeared. Some of the invading tribes, keen to spread their own mission and culture, obliterated the traces of past culture and civilization so much so that in many cases nothing is left. From time to time, thoughts, ideas and cultures have poured in and out of the valley and in the process, the valley and the people

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developed close contacts with its neighbours—Gandhara, Afghanistan, Iran, western Turkistan, Republics of Central Asia, eastern Turkistan or Sinkiang, Tibet and China right from prehistoric times. All through its history, the people of the valley have borne the brunt of attacks from outside forces and after-effects of natural calamities. There are definite traces of similarities, commonness and affinities in socio-cultural relations of the people inhabiting the valley and the people of the adjacent regions. Climatic changes have also to a great extent brought about cultural changes in the country from time to time.

2. Archaeological Background

The archaeological wealth of Kashmir was confined to the literary records centred upon Sanskrit and its ancient literature, foreign travel accounts largely categorised as forgotten records. Much was spoken of the religious edifices of high grandeur and sanctity but in the absence of any archaeological findings these lacked chronological order. The history and civilization of ancient Kashmir was, therefore, over-emphasized presenting a series of perplexing contrasts and problems. The pioneer work in the rediscovery of Kashmir's past was done by the Europeans who undertook systematic geological and archaeological expeditions in the beginning of the 19th century and collected a lot of useful and reliable information on the environmental and geological features, ancient monuments, buildings, statues of stones or metals, terracottas, ornamental or decorative fragments etc. Nothing was mentioned about the ancient settlements of the valley. Still their promptly published reports with documentary evidences especially on the archaeology of Kashmir attracted the attention of the scientific world long before the then State Government could conceive the necessity of establishing its own department for prompting archaeological activities in the State.

The scholars, archaeologists and explorers who visited the valley were not so much attracted by the natural scenery of the land as by the ancient buildings which they considered unique in their features, distinct from any other style known in India.

a) *Foreign Accounts*

Messrs Moorcraft and Trebeck were the first batch of intelligent observers who visited the valley in 1819-1825. They were followed by Messrs G.T. Vigne and Baron Hugle in 1833. The former being an artist recorded the drawings of the monumental buildings with accuracy. The latter too in his report brought to the notice of the public the talent the artists had exhibited in the construction of these buildings.

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A pioneer work, the first of its kind, duly illustrated by folding plates, maps, plans, elevation etc was attempted by General Alexander Cunningham some time in the year 1848. The work was supplemented by Rev. W.G. Cowie in the year 1866. He published further details about the temple buildings which were elaborately illustrated.[1]

After two years, i.e. in 1868, Lieutenant R.E. Cole of the Central Archaeological Department visited the valley with his staff and made a valuable contribution by way of publishing the architectural details, plans and excellent photographs of the temples.

This was followed by James Fergusson's work on *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* a decade after Cole's publication. He made a scientific analysis of some of the monuments of Kashmir with a brief reference to monuments with similar architectural features in the Himalayas.

The summer of 1888 was memorable in the history of archaeology of Kashmir when Sir Aurel Stein visited the valley. He was a distinguished scholar, adventurer, explorer and above all an eminent archaeologist. He was not only fascinated by the monumental wealth of Kashmir but also by the literary work of Kalhana, a poet-cum-historian of 12th century. Referring to his work *Rajatarangini*, he said, "this was the earliest and most important of the Sanskrit chronicles of Kashmir and an exact identification of the very numerous old localities mentioned in it was indispensable for a correct understanding of the narrative."[2] The *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana written in 1149-50 A.D. is regarded as an historical text in the true sense of the word. While writing his chronicle, the author had not only taken great pains to collect his material from the existing chronicles and other sources, but he had laid down certain general principles for the writing of history at the beginning of the book.[3] Right from 1888 to 1898, he devoted his time to editing of the text, preparing a critical historical and geographical introduction to the work which entailed a thorough exploration of hills, archaeological sites and monuments in the valley. In the first instance he published in 1892 a complete critical edition of the text of the chronicle. He expanded his plan of work in the subsequent years and in the year 1899 he published his *Memoir on Maps Illustrating the Ancient Geography of Kashmir*. In 1900, he published his monumental work in two volumes—the translation of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* with detailed notes, identification of sites, places with historical and geographical background. His investigation in the field thus made it possible for other scholars and investigators to trace the unknown historical sites and structures with accuracy. Even in the years to come, his work will serve as an index to Kashmir archaeology.

The work done by Major Cole, Bishop Cowie, General Cunningham and Sir Aurel Stein caught the attention of His Highness' Government and it was realized

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that there was still a great deal to be done and that the valuable work started by these scholars should not be allowed to go waste. J.Ph. Vogel, Archaeological Surveyor of the then Punjab State observed that some of the parts of the state had not been explored. He was hopeful that much material would come to light if further inquiries were made. In pursuance of these reports, the State Council of His Highness' Government adopted a resolution on 20th June 1904 under which a new line of archaeological and historical research was introduced. The organisation was known as the Archaeological and Research Department, mainly to focus its attention on i) the study of, and research into the ancient history, literature, arts and sciences of the country, ii) the furtherance of the same along the lines of modern scholarship, and iii) the preservation of anything of archaeological interest already known or yet to be discovered. The department was looked after by its Director, J.C. Chatterji.[4] Vogel in his tour of Kashmir had pinpointed some of the important ancient temples for undertaking preservative measures and also stressed the need for the maintenance of Mohammadan buildings and Mughal gardens. Further at his instance, the Darbar advised the Director to take up the work of the department on the following lines:

a) to take steps for the preservation of numerous monuments that were known to exist in Kashmir;
b) to explore many out-of-the-way places lying in the extensive territories of Jammu and Kashmir State;
c) to make a list of the monuments discovered;
d) to explore all likely antiquarian sites; and
e) to collect all historical material like epigraphs, coins, traditions etc bearing upon the history and archaeology of the state.[5]

As a follow-up action on the special report submitted to the Darbar by Vogel, J.C. Chatterji, the Director was deputed to England to equip himself with the advanced study of archaeology at Cambridge, but it was reported that instead he devoted his time to the study of philosophy and did not avail himself of the materials and facilities which Cambridge offered for archaeological studies.

The Government of India also took keen interest in the archaeological problems of the state. W.H. Nicholis came over here and submitted his conservation note on certain Mohammadan monuments and also a report on Mughal gardens at Srinagar in September 1906. In 1909, Dr. Sten Konow, government epigraphist for India attached to the Director General was deputed here. In his 'Note on a Tour in Kashmir,' he brought to light many new monuments, inscriptions and manuscripts. His visit was followed by Marshall in the year 1908. In his 'Note on Archaeological Work in Kashmir,' he supplemented the data already furnished by Sten Konow. His note made some recommendations for the conservation of some of the important

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temples, Muslim monuments and Mughal gardens. In his report, he, however, recorded that nothing had been achieved by the Archaeological Department since it was attached with the Research wing and that the annual grant made by the state for the conservation of the monuments and other objects had been for the most part diverted to different purposes. The conservation work, if and when undertaken, lacked experienced supervision. Even the Chief Engineer of the state wisely postponed the execution of the work till the department could provide an experienced supervisor to look after such operations.

The sorry state of affairs concerning the activities of the Archaeological Department had made Sir John Marshall to visit Kashmir in the year 1907 and see the things for himself. During his tenure as the Director General of Archaeology of India, commendable work was done in conservation, exploration and research. In his 'Note on Archaeological Work' sent to the Kashmir Darbar, he suggested among other things, the excavations to be carried out at Avantipura. In this venture, he had offered active assistance from the Archaeological Survey of India. The Darbar turned down this suggestion and favoured such type of works to be exclusively carried out by its own officers. Obviously, the Director of the Department of Archaeology and Research, J.C. Chatterji took up the excavations here. He exposed the area around the courtyard hardly 2 mts from the then existing ground level and some part of the peristyle at Avantiswami temple was exposed. Much more had to be done but he did not pursue the work; even with the training he had received in archaeology in England, he was found to be more interested in the literature and philosophy of the Hindus than with the problems which confronted the archaeological work in Kashmir.

b) *Inception of Archaeology*

On the advice of the Director General of Archaeology, Sir John Marshall, the two wings of the department were split; a separate Department of Archaeology was thus created and the services of an experienced officer, Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, were loaned to the State Department by the Government of India. He assumed charge in the year 1912 and his post was designated as Superintendent of Archaeological Department, Jammu and Kashmir State. During his tenure of four years, he excavated the Buddhist site at Pandrethan near Srinagar, the temples of Avantiswamin and Avantishvara at Avantipura, 28 kms south-east of Srinagar, and Ushkur in Baramulla etc. He also attended to the conservation work of other temples. In 1915 Sir John Marshall sent a memorandum to the Government concerning the repairs of Jama Masjid. Having served for four years, Sahni was relieved of his duties here and in his place another officer of the Archaeological Survey, Hiranand Shastri was deputed. He looked after the department for about

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two and a half years. Besides undertaking conservation measures for some of the monuments, he resorted to digging in and around the ancient temple at Fatehgarh below Baramulla. He also spotted the famous site of Harwan (ancient Shadarhadavana). On the basis of surface findings, he had predicted that further findings would yield very good results. His observations certainly proved prophetic. He also pointed out a site situated on the left bank of the river Jhelum on the old route about 7 kms from Baramulla and about 10 kms by the Jhelum valley road opposite Ghantamula, known as Jaimpur. He believed it to be an *apabhramsa* of Jamadagnipura, or the town of Jamadagni, the father of Parashurama. The site had three pretty large mounds which in his view were the remains of some *stupas*. Both the sites were approved for excavations by the Director General. In addition to his own duties, he worked as an Honorary Secretary and Curator of Sri Pratap Singh Museum in which capacity he got exhibits there rearranged, and labelled on the visit of the then Viceroy of India to the institution in October 1918.[6]

A young scholar from Kashmir, Ram Chandra Kak, had been selected by the Government for training in conservation of monuments, exploration, excavations and report writing under Sir John Marshall, Director General of Archaeology in India. After the completion of his training, Kak took over the charge of the department in September 1919, replacing Hiranand Shastri, who was reverted to his parent department.

c) *Impetus and Ordeals*

The department was now under the stewardship of a trained archaeologist. Obviously archaeological research now received a new impetus. Kak undertook the excavation work at Harwan which revealed a full-fledged Buddhist settlement laid out on the terraced slope of the hill. Digging was also resorted to at Kakapura—a village situated at the confluence of the Romushi and Vitasta rivers, and also at Zehanpur opposite Ghantamula in Baramulla district. Mention about Zehanpur had already been made by his predecessor and his views were once again upheld by the Director General. At the request of the Darbar, Sir John Marshall undertook a rapid tour of the valley between 19th April and 29th April 1922 in the company of the Superintendent. Recommendations for the conservation of some monuments, Mughal gardens and for the upkeep of the Museum at Srinagar were made to the Government.[7] Accordingly he took keen interest in the maintenance, upkeep and conservation, on scientific lines, of both Hindu and Muslim monuments. Kak also published his monumental book *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* and a *Guide Book to S.P.S. Museum.* Both the books were supported by photographs and drawings. Besides, with his assistance, G.E.L. Carter published a memoir on *Stone Age in Kashmir* while he himself published another such memoir on *Marev Wadwan.*

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These too were duly illustrated. However, it is well known that it was during his tenure as the Superintendent of Archaeology that significant work was done both on the literary side and also in the field of archaeology. Compilation of the list of monuments, and places of archaeological interest, maintenance of photographic and drawing records and publication of timely related reports on the findings were his chief contribution to Kashmir archaeology.[8] In this stupendous task, he received ceaseless and sincere cooperation from his able and highly talented Surveyor, Zinda Lal Kaul commonly known in the valley as 'Masterjee'. In due recognition of the good work done by Kak, the Department of Archaeology was again amalgamated with that of the Research Section. In this way, he managed three inter-related units viz, Archaeology, Research and Museum. This pattern of working was followed by his successors as well.

For his talent and good work, Kak was promoted as Foreign Secretary in the year 1929 (later on elevated as Prime Minister, J & K State) and in his place a veteran Sanskrit scholar, Pandit Madhusudan Kaul, took over the reins of the department. Befitting his calibre, he devoted greatest attention towards the research wing of the department. During his tenure, the then Director General of Archaeology in India, Rai Bahadur K.N. Dikshit, visited some of the monuments and recommended that work should be done on the lines followed by Kak, his predecessor. Consequently, interest was also taken in archaeological problems. A Sanskrit inscription in Sharada script was discovered from the premises of the ancient temple of Martand. Composed in verse in a highly ornate style, it refers to the installation of the image of the Sun-god by Avantivarman (855-883). The clearance of debris here also revealed the existence of two bases, one being enclosed within the other. The inner one had a different set of gods and goddesses carved on its face which stood concealed till then by the huge stone blocks of outer platform. A unique find of a *Prabhavali* or a frame of brass was exhumed in the excavations at a temple situated in the village Devsar (ancient Devasaras) about 50 miles from Srinagar in Kulgam tehsil. Obtained at a depth of 9' below the plinth level, it is 6' 2" long, 4' 4" broad and about 1/2" thick and is 3 maunds and 4 seers in weight. It is oval in shape but its bottom end is flattened. On its border are images which were identified by the excavator as different incarnations of Vishnu. Herman Goetz identified the central figure as Buddha adorned by other Vaishnavite images, including Sun and Moon gods. He thus observed it to be an evidence of Buddhism having been absorbed into the Hindu syncretism—a process which was prevalent in other parts of medieval India. He recorded that the brass frame "is a most interesting document of a revolutionary phase in Indian art history." He ascribed it to king Sankarvarman's reign (883-902)[9] while Kaul, the excavator, recorded that the latest date that could be given to the frame would not be far removed from the 12th century A.D.[10]

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In the year 1931, the department was reduced and thus the activities on the literary and field archaeology fronts suffered a set back. The care of the maintenance of monuments was entrusted to the Revenue Department. After a gap of four years, field survey in the valley was undertaken by the Yale-Cambridge expedition led by Professors H.De Terra and T.T. Paterson. They carried out a detailed study of glacial sequence and lake sediments in Kashmir, and in the process referred to some prehistoric sites[11]. They obtained fossil remains from Sombur; a significant item was the trunk of a primitive elephant, *Elephas hysudricus*, which they proposed to carry abroad but were dissuaded by His Highness' Government from doing so. However the data provided by them opened a new chapter for further field work. Their fruitful and investigative pursuits compelled the State Government to review the situation and in the year 1936, the Department of Archaeology was again revived and amalgamated with its sister institute of Research and as before placed under the supervision of M.S. Kaul.

In August, 1938 Kaul made a very short tour to Gilgit and carried out small scale excavations at Nawapura, five miles from Gilgit. He opened four mounds. Each of these revealed stone edifices of varying sizes inside. From these, he also obtained numerous clay models of *stupas*, ivory rings and some other small antiquities. The significant discovery was of six manuscripts (four complete) besides several fragments of manuscripts. The wooden covers of *Samghatasutra* manuscript, one of the important texts, are painted profusely and so are those of other manuscripts.[12] *Samghatasutra* expounds the different ways of religious merit in two dialogues between Buddha and two Bodhisattvas without the slightest touch of philosophy. Datable to 7th century these dialogues had a great appeal to the Buddhists, thus pointing to the flourishing era of Buddhism in this frontier region of Kashmir. The Kashmir Darbar also took keen interest in the publication of these manuscripts and a series of these volumes have been published since 1939.[13]

One more contribution of Kaul is the excavation at Tapar (ancient Pratapapura) situated at a distance of 47 kms to the south-west of Srinagar on Srinagar-Baramulla road. A base, courtyard, enclosure wall, pathway and other architectural members were exposed. The town and the temple are attributed to king Pratapaditya II (7th century A.D.), son of Durlabhavardhana of Karkota dynasty and father of the famous king Lalitaditya of the 8th century A.D. Among the antiquities found here are two inscriptions in Sharada script incised on stone blocks. These refer to the repairs effected by Gagga, the worthy son of a Brahman Jagaraja, a great teacher of the Vaishnava cult in the reign of Parmananda, son of Jayasimha (1157 A.D.). The layout of the temple itself indicates that the entire structure was dedicated to Vishnu.

Another inscription in Sharada script was also obtained by him from Kothier

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(ancient Kapatesvara) near Acchabal, district Anantnag. He also attended to the repairs of the domes of the tomb of Zain-ul-Abidin's mother (Badshah monument) in Srinagar.[14]

The government, however, felt that with the staff properly trained in the field of archaeology, more significant results could have been obtained especially in excavations, conservation and report writing. In order to put Kashmir archaeology on a stable footing, the need for trained archaeologists was envisaged.

During the last years of the British rule in India, the government appointed Sir Mortimer Wheeler as Director General of Archaeology following the retirement of K.N. Dikshit in the year 1944. Wheeler was a dynamic person, well versed in the scientific and specialised techniques of excavation. He was of the view that archaeological research should have an intelligent planning. For this purpose, he wrote to the vice chancellors of various universities and the heads of the state governments to depute competent students for training in archaeological techniques. The Kashmir Government selected a young scholar, T.N. Khazanchi, for attending the course of training in excavation, conservation, publication and in other allied subjects. His training period lasted three and a half years. After completing the training, he took over as Superintendent, Archaeology, Research and Museum from Prof. J.D. Zadoo who had temporarily been given charge of the department after the retirement of M.S. Kaul. Khazanchi's outlook would have really put a new life into the organisation, had not far reaching political and administrative changes taken place in the state in the wake of independence in India soon after he took over. In Kashmir, the political atmosphere further deteriorated because of tribal invasion. The popular government headed by late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah lost no time in issuing cabinet orders to the effect that the department should be brought under reduction and that the monuments should be put under the care of Public Works Department. This was perhaps done due to lack of funds for what he considered to be the least productive department. The people at large were, however, interested in the promotion of culture in an independent India and naturally they expressed their resentment against the government's decision through telegrams and numerous petitions which were sent to the Prime Minister and other leaders of the Central Government. The Prime Minister, Jawahar Lal Nehru, who always took keen interest in the history and culture of his country, got worried and sent a high level team headed by Dr. Tarachand, Education Secretary. The other two members of the team were Dr. N.P. Chakravarty (Director General, Archaeological Survey of India) and Dr. Sen (Anthropological Survey of India). Many scholars, political leaders and the organizers of cultural associations met the members of the team in Srinagar and impressed upon them the urgent need for the revival of the department. On their recommendations, and also in view of the public

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resentment, the cabinet issued fresh orders for partial revival of the department. T.N. Khazanchi, redesignated as Archaeologist-cum-Curator, was allowed to function with limited powers and he was to be assisted by a skeleton staff. With no funds at his disposal, he could not function and the activities of the department were more or less paralysed. In the year 1950, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Education Minister, himself visited the department. He was pained to see the difficulties which the department was facing both on the technical and administrative fronts. He was pleased to see the archaeological collections in the Museum and expressed the need for further augmentation of the funds for exploration and excavations. He spoke thus to Col. Pir Mohammad, the then Education Minister of the State who accompanied him, "For any civilized government, it is not feasible to close down such cultural organisations." To this, the Minister replied, "Sir, God willing, we will revive the department again." On reaching Delhi, Maulana advised the Deputy Director General of Archaeological Survey of India, M.S. Vats, to go to Kashmir and draft a scheme for the re-organisation of the Department of Archaeology, Research and Museum. Vats stayed in Kashmir for a period of two weeks during which period he went into the working of the department and submitted a comprehensive report as desired by Maulana Sahib. While making some concrete recommendations for the smooth functioning of Research and Museum wings of the department, he dealt at length with the main objectives of the archaeological research in the valley of Kashmir. He exhaustively surveyed the history of the excavations conducted by the department till then together with a chronological sequence of the architectural masterpieces of the Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic periods, but he lamented that no scientific attempt had been made to bring to light habitational sites or 'town sites' associated with the monuments. He recommended that serious attempts should be made to uncover such sites, maintaining that the life of any people could best be known by the houses they lived in, the amenities they enjoyed and the economic conditions, customs and manners they upheld. All this could be revealed by uncovering important sections of representative towns. He also observed that archaeological conservation is a highly specialised scientific work, which in its conception and execution is so different from modern engineering that no amount of instructions would enable the PWD to make it a success. Strong recommendations in the report were made to the effect that if such work is to be conducted on scientific lines in Kashmir, the Archaeological Department should be vested with full responsibility for its execution. For future planning, he drew out detailed conservation notes on the monuments, especially on Mughal gardens. Apart from trained conservation staff, he suggested, for proper upkeep of the monuments, to engage a small permanent gang consisting of one mason and one cooli debitable to archaeological works. By their constant association with the

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monuments, they could get used to special stone and brick work, underpinning, grouting etc, to which the ordinary mason is not accustomed. In order to rescue the glorious but the gloomy aspects of history from getting into oblivion, and to preserve the cultural heritage of Kashmir, he suggested that T.N. Khazanchi, with his experience and extensive training in the Archaeological Survey of India under R.E. Mortimer Wheeler should be allowed to work on all these fronts.

M.S. Vats sent his report to both the Central and State Governments. The State Government took some initiative towards the reorganisation of the Archaeology Department. The Research wing was separated and some budget provision was made for the maintenance and the repairs of the monuments. The arcade at Verinag was leaking and there was danger that it may crumble down; repairs were undertaken here on the lines suggested by Vats in his conservation report. On a very small scale, excavation work was also taken up at Muma Khan near Central Jail at Srinagar. This revealed a one period sequence. Twenty-three copper coins were obtained from here belonging to late medieval period. Besides, the archaeological section of Sri Pratap Singh Museum was remodelled and the exhibits arranged in a chronological order. Some minor exploration in the valley was also conducted.

After independence, the set-up of the Archaeological Department in India underwent a process of overhauling. Archaeology being a central subject, monuments of national importance in other states along with the related staff were being taken over by the Central Department of Archaeology but no such move was taken by the Jammu and Kashmir Government.

Dr. B.C. Chhabra, Deputy Director General, Archaeological Survey of India was on a private visit to the valley in the year 1955. Incidentally, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also came over here on an official visit following the change of Government in J & K. Dr. Chhabra made a courtesy call on Maulana Sahib, who directed him to look into the problems of archaeology in the State. He accordingly met the then Education Minister of the State, G.M. Sadiq, who was aware of the archaeological potentialities of the valley. Mr. Sadiq agreed that there was a need for reinforcing the activities of the department and that a firm policy should be laid down for promoting archaeological research on the pattern of the Central Department of Archaeology. The basic ground was thus cleared both at the central and state level. A clear cut policy was framed and accordingly the State Legislative Assembly passed a resolution on April 6, 1955 stating therein that for preservation of cultural heritage, the monuments and the staff of the concerned department should be transferred to the Central Department of Archaeology. The resolution received the approval of the State Government also. After having it approved by various agencies both in the state and at the centre, the notification of the President of India was issued on February 13, 1958. In pursuance of the notification, the Director

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General, A. Ghosh came to Kashmir and his Deputy T.N. Ramchandran to Jammu for locating the monuments and sites of national importance. Accordingly they selected 54 such monuments and sites for take over along with the assets and the attached staff. The actual take over was given effect from Ist July 1958.

With the take over of the charge of monuments and sites of national importance, a new chapter opened in the history of the department, and the uncertainty in its working was over. The staff was reinforced, though some administrative lacuna remained which too was cleared in November 1959. With the provision of funds under various heads, proposals for promoting archaeological research were framed. V.D. Krishnaswami, Deputy Director General, Archaeological Survey of India led a team of experts on an exploration from Pahalgam to the holy cave of Amarnath. This was followed by a full-fledged excavation at Burzahom in Srinagar district. This was given priority so as to clear the controversial observations made about the site by earlier excavators and explorers. Simultaneously the exploration of the valley brought to light many more such habitational sites that set aside the controversial argument maintained by the earlier experts that Burzahom type of megalithic-cum-neolithic site is the only one of its kind in the valley. The results of excavation here were fascinating and prompted other Indian archaeologists to explore the area further so as to identify the preceding cultures as well.[15] Excavations at another site of Gufkral, 41 kms to the south-east of Srinagar revealed identical features as found at Burzahom.[16] Similarly, excavations at Semthan near Bijibehara (Anantnag) have yielded significant results regarding the early historical period of the valley. Trial diggings at Harwan (Srinagar), Martand (Anantnag), Ushkur (Baramulla) have presented earlier evidences at these sites. Besides, the conservation measures which had been sporadic were now carried out in a planned manner by the trained conservation staff.

These epoch-making discoveries and achievements made the State Government to open its own Department of Archaeology mainly to look after the monuments or sites not declared as of national importance. It has also conducted some meaningful explorations in the valley.

The archaeological research in respect of excavations and explorations, revealed astonishing similarities between Kashmir and various regions of Central Asia.[17] The late Chief Minister, Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah, took keen notice of these findings and directed the then Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Rais Ahmed to establish a Centre of Central Asian Studies in the University so that research through multi-disciplinary angles could be carried out in cultural, economical, geographical, social and political fields relating to various regions of the Central Asia. In order to preserve artefacts or other documents for convenience and study of research students and interested scholars, a Central Asian Museum was attached to the Centre. For pro-

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gressive expansion of the museum, an Archaeological Unit was also added to it. The unit explored new sites and town sites. The surface collections thus made enriched the museum antiquities. The museum was as such equipped with an Archaeological Repository presenting thereby a cultural sequence right from prehistoric times to late medieval period. The unit worked in close collaboration with the scientists of Palaeoclimatic Project.

The Kashmir Palaeoclimatic Project was initiated in 1980 to study through multi-disciplinary investigations the sedimentology, the geomorphology, the micropalaeontology, the palynology, the invertebrate and vertebrate palaeontology, the diatoms, the isotopic geochemistry, and the archaeology so as to delineate the broad outlines of the climatic changes the valley experienced during the late cenozoic period.[18] In course of these investigations, the experts discovered a number of palaeolithic, neolithic and Kushana sites. Their preliminary data also showed that during neolithic and Kushana periods, the density and distribution of settlements increased drammatically.[19] They also discovered, during their extensive studies on the loessic profiles in the valley, some new lithic and ceramic industries marking clear technological affinities of the preceding neolithic cultures.[20]

Enormous advances have been made in the field of archaeology during the last three decades now. Some light on the ancient history of Kashmir has been thrown but for arriving at definite chronological and sequential inter-regional relationship and also for solving long pending archaeological problems intensive explorations need to be carried out.

Environmental and climatic changes have played a vital role in building or diffusing the cultural talent of the primitive man in the valley. The valley was endowed with a unique type of environment unparalleled in the whole of the Himalayas. The early man took keen interest in understanding the environment, the effects of natural forces, plants and animals, chain of irregular mountains, abundance of water, lofty plateaus or wide valleys. The standard of civilization that man achieved under unforeseen climatic changes is not so easy to understand and that too without the benefit of written history. Whatever the scientists have been able to collect through their multi-pronged investigations is presented briefly in the ensuing chapters so that it helps us to understand the history and culture of ancient Kashmir in its correct perspective.

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Tradition says that Kashmir was once a lake hundreds of feet deep. It was occupied by a demon called Jalodbhava (water-born) till Vishnu assumed the form of a boar (*Varaha*), killed the demon and struck the mountain at Baramulla (ancient Varahamulla), boring an opening in it for the river water to flow through. The water of the lake rushed out and the valley was freed of the demon. This is further corroborated by other references recorded in the literary works. The earliest surviving Sanskrit literature of the valley is *Nilamata Purana* wherein it is said that the valley was formed out of water, when the lake was drained off by Ananta, at the behest of Vishnu, through an outlet at Baramulla. The chief of the Nagas, the author of the *Purana* and the son of sage Kashyapa, took care of the land and named it after his father. The Nagas were not friendly with Pishachas, the other group of people residing in the valley, but in course of time they gained their goodwill.[1] Supporting this assertion, the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, writes that the vale of Kashmir was formerly a Naga lake. Fifty years after the *Nirvana* of Buddha, Ananda's disciple Madhyantika came over here and converted the dragon king of the lake to Buddhism. The king then founded 500 Sangharamas and invited sages and saints from outside the valley to come and settle here. They were to receive religious offerings from Nagas—the people of the land.[2] Kalhana, the author of *Rajatarangini*, says that Prajapati Kashyapa was assisted by Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in killing the demon of the lake, Jalodbhava. After his death, the lake water was drained off and the land came to be known as Kashmir after Kashyapa.[3] The text further attributes supernatural powers to Nagas residing in the valley.

The Persian chroniclers also refer to similar accounts relating to the origin of the valley. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, an anonymous source-material (1614-25), states that Kashmir remained submerged in water for two thousand years. In the neighbourhood, there dwelt a married hermit Kash from India. He made supplication to God for a piece of dry land where he could pray and carry out a living. One can infer from it that there existed a lake water. The author maintains that God granted his request and sent down three angels with the command that the water be drained out and the land dried up, making as much of it available to the hermit as was required by him. The orders were carried out by the angels and the dry land so formed was named after the sage Kashyapa. Another writer, Mulla Abdal Nabi Kashmiri, gives the story an Islamic touch by associating it with the deluge of Noah. He says that when the deluge took place the whole world including Kashmir was under water. At that time the valley was known as 'Sati Sar' meaning thereby that the large lake was named after the Goddess 'Sati'. About the deluge, he continues, that when the throne of Solomon landed at the hill of Shankaracharya, named since then as Takht-i-Sulaiman, only the summit of the hill was visible. The people roamed in boats and used to reside on the top of the hill. In this connection

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reference has been made to the moorings of the boats on the summit and in a sheer flight of imagination, existence of iron rings has also been referred to. Solomon after having taken his seat on the summit of the hill ordered two *jins* Kashf and Mir to have the water of the lake drained out. They obeyed his orders and made the water of the lake to flow out through a pass at Khadanyar below Baramulla. In due recognition of their services, the waterless land so formed was named after them as Kashfmir or Kashmir. Altering the details and combining the local mythological story with Solomon's Islamic legend seem sheer fantasy, lacking historical basis.[4]

In an another Persian chronicle, the writer maintains that in early days the low plains of Kashmir were originally a deep lake between high mountains. Its water was pure and plentiful. The snow on the top of mountains melted and formed a lake below. There was no outlet because of high mountainous barriers. Regarding the outlet of the lake water he repeates the story that Mata Sati meaning Parvati, representing the full strength (*Shakti*) of Mahadeva, appeared on the scene and came out in a boat for a pleasure trip from her abode of Harmukh peak in Lar valley right upto Kaunsarnag to the west of Banihal pass. She named this vast lake as Sati Sar, meaning thereby the 'lake of Sati' (in Sanskrit Sar means a lake). Then he refers to the struggle saint Kashyapa had with the lake demon Jalodbhava (water-born) who was finally killed by the gods. After the demon's death, the water was drained out and the land so formed was called 'Kashyapa Mar', which later on came to be known as 'Kashmir'. He also makes a fanciful observation that in those days people lived on the peaks of mountains and roamed from one end to another in boats which were tied to moorings. These moorings, according to him, could be seen on the peaks of Harmukh, Kaunsarnag and many other places. The sailors bored holes in the stones and tied their boats firmly to them. He mentions a place where such a process of tightening the boats was in operation as 'Naubandhan'—a known sacred place. The origin of the name of the place, he stresses, is traceable to this process. Explaining the word, he says that in Sanskrit 'Nau' means boat and 'Bandhan' means to tie. Hence the place is known as 'Naubandhan'. In support of his assertion, he mentions the existence of some mortars which had become clean and smooth because of excessive use by the people who lived on these mountains. On these bases, he upholds the view that the water level of the lake rose to that height.[5] Concluding his story he says that God alone knows the actual truth about the origin of the valley. Other Persian chroniclers in their works have reiterated more or less the same version regarding the origin of the land consequent upon the drainage of the lake water. Notable among them are Hajji Mohi-ud-din Miskin,[6] Hargopal Kaul,[7] Haider Malik Chadura,[8] Pandit Narayana Kaul,[9] Khwaja Muhammad Azam Diddamari,[10] and Dewan Kirpa Ram.[11]

There are other important sources of information regarding the lake, sacred

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places, early historical geography of the place, pilgrimage routes and topographical details which too are also of inestimable value. Jayadratha in his informative work gives a detailed account of the shrines and the legends mostly associated with Shiva and his forms.[12]

There are a few devotional texts besides the accounts given by numerous *Mahatmyas*, which give the student of history valuable information on various *tirthas*, springs (*Nagas*), mountains, rivers, and provide other geographical and topographical details. Sahibrama (a 19th century Pandit scholar from Srinagar) gives a detailed account of all the sacred places in his work entitled *Kashmirtirthasamgraha*. So also *Mahatmyas* were composed by Pandits incharge of each of the *Tirthas* for the benefit of devotees. Though not very old, they still point out to the earlier accounts of the valley with particular reference to the *Tirthas* and their lords in praise of whom they were composed. For instance *Naubandhanmahatmya* among other legends refers to three high snowy peaks towards the west of Banihal pass which the composer traditionally looks upon as personifications of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu. Ignoring the command of these divinites to come out of the lake, the demon Jalodbhava, who was invisible, did not stir out. Then Balabhadra, the brother of Vishnu, struck the mountain with his own weapon—the ploughshare. The water flowed down and the lake became dry. Then Vishnu in a fierce fight killed the demon. Kaunsarnag (ancient Kramasaras) below the *Naubandhan Tirtha* is still an object of worship, since markings of footsteps on a rock here are regarded as those of Vishnu (Vishnu *pad*) which were said to have been left by him while killing the demon. In an another such literary reference of *Sharikapariccheda*, a *Mahatmya* in praise of Sharika Goddess and the hill near Srinagar, an interesting story is mentioned regarding the lake and its drainage process. It states that water-born demon Jalodbhava brought havoc to people residing on the periphery of the lake. The gods then implored Mata Sati—the consort of Lord Shiva, to deliver the land and the people from the oppression of the demon. Moved by their imploration, she took the form of a Sharika bird (Maina in Sans. and Haer in Kashmiri). She took a pebble in her beak and dropped it over the spot where the demon stayed. The pebble grew into a gigantic hill and the demon got crushed under its weight. This very hill is known as Sharika hill after Goddess Sharika, popularly called 'Hari Parbat' after Kashmiri 'Haer'. On the north-west side of the hill, natural markings on the rock form the mystical diagram known as *Srichakra* which has continued to be an object of worship. This hill is also known as 'Pradyumna Petha' or the seat of Pradyumna, being connected with the love story of his son, Aniruddha and Usha.[13]

Whatever the genuineness of the legend, the place is revered even now as the seat of the gods who have taken their abode over the hill in gratitude to Sharika—a form of Goddess Durga.

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These legends, in uniform or multiform versions, indicate that the vale was occupied by a vast lake, which is now confirmed by nearly every traveller to Kashmir. On the basis of scientific observations, Frederic Drew, while advocating this thesis writes, 'The traditions of the natives—traditions that can be historically traced as having existed for ages—tend in the same direction, and these have usually been considered to corroborate the conclusions drawn from the observed phenomena.'[14]

2. Scientific Observations

The lacustrine or lake deposits are preserved in the Karewas which were exposed after the lake water was drained off at a gorge near Baramulla. These are characterized by layered and unlayered clay, sand, conglomerate gravel, loess, plant and mega-fossils, and their scientific studies have posed many challenges for the workers who in the process have made some exciting observations. Besides Frederic Drew, many geologists, palaeobotanists, geochronologists and palaeontologists have studied these Karewas, but their accounts are termed more or less as 'explorers' observations.[15] Sporadic work was attempted by Major Godwin-Austen (1864),[16] Lydekker (1878),[17] Oldham (1893),[18] Middlemiss (1911)[19] and others. There were controversies regarding the existence of the lake and the area covered by it. Oldham went to the extent of saying that the presence of lacustrine deposits of the Karewas does not suggest that the entire valley was ever occupied by a lake.[20] Probably he could not study the entire deposit of the Karewas which could not have accumulated without the aid of a dam lower than the valley floor, the water of which must have ponded back to the sides[20].

It was in 1935 that a detailed study of Karewas, which represented the deposits of the lake, the effects of glaciation and interglaciation activities was made by the Yale-Cambridge expedition consisting of H.De Terra (leader), Teihard de Chardin and T.T. Paterson.[21] They also undertook the task of looking into the prehistoric human cultures of Punjab, the Narbada and Madras[22] and made stray references to that effect in the valley also. Looking back to the millions of years of the pleistocene age in the valley, they have fully demonstrated the results of the four cycles of glaciation and intermittent interglacial periods which in themselves were responsible for the origin and shrinkage of the lake, formation of Karewas divisible into two groups, the lower and the upper, separated by the moraines of second glaciation. At the beginning of pleistocene age, the Kashmir valley did not present such a grandeur as its south-western rampart, the Pir Panjal was less elevated than the other on the north-east side, the Himalayan range. Because of the lesser altitude of Pir Panjal, there was advance of monsoon currents into the valley, which at that time was a faulted intermontane basin fully bordered by the highly elevated Hima-

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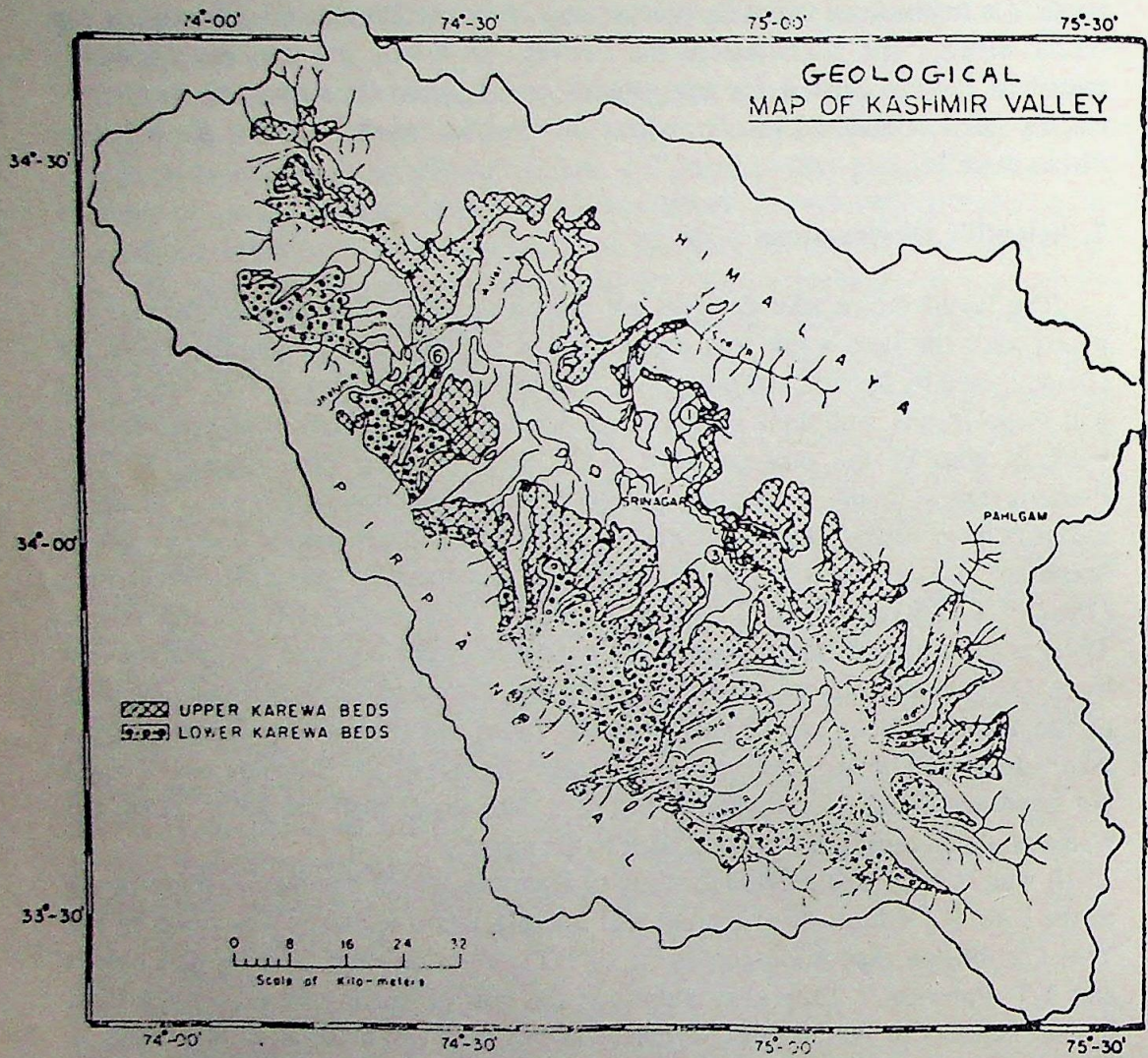

Fig. 1. Geological map of Kashmir valley.

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laya. This was because of the intensity of the first glaciation. The climate at this stage was colder. They observed thick accumulation of debris below the lower Karewa of the pleistocene lake, when the entire valley must have been under the cover of ice sheets. The first interglacial activity saw the uprising of the Pir Panjal, damming of the upper Jhelum and dissolution of the first glaciers. Even at that stage, the newly formed lake had its outlet near Baramulla but it was unable to overflow owing to the height of the barriers which might have gained altitude as the Kashmir basin floor subsided. The climate was milder than the earlier period as a result of which elephants of upper Siwalik types, deer and other varieties of mammals and birds inhabited the shores and valleys. In the second glaciation there was again cold climate which was unfavourable for mammals. There was extensive uplift on both the Pir Panjal and Himalayan flanks though it was still less on the north-east side. As the snow dissipated, the streams newly formed resumed their activity. Huge quantities of debris began to accumulate at the valley outlets. This period also witnessed excess of rainfall. Consequent on such glacial activities, the lower silt of the upper Karewas was laid down but because of the erosion no loess deposition sealing the second group of Karewas was visible. The second interglacial period was warmer. The snow of ancient glaciers melted. In the lake, deposition continued for sometime till further uplift of Pir Panjal, and the lake water began to drain off. With the general decrease of the water supply, the Jhelum river emerged and actively engaged in deepening its bed. With continued erosion and uplift tendencies, the lake water largely drained off and because of favourable climatic conditions it could have become possible for the palaeo man to live who had to depend on the big game. Ample evidence of his existence in the adjoining areas has been found. With the drainage of the lake, seasonal duststorms deposited a thin layer of yellow silt, probably loess, over the shell-bearing lake beds. In the third glaciation period, glaciers advanced afresh through newly deepened channels. Water fauna was richer, belts were well forested and plains provided with abundance of vegetation. The third interglacial period saw the erosion of streams due to retreat of glaciers. The rivers lowered their channels and even the isolated lakes were emptied through deepened spell ways. Though insignificant, fourth glaciation was marked by several retreat stages of glaciers when only a smaller fraction of the valley and that too on the higher reaches was occupied. Contrary to later investigations, De Terra and Paterson observed that the present day lakes of the valley like Wular, Manasbal, Anchar and Dal are derived from the enlarged oxbows and abandoned flood channels rather than from progressive shrinkage of the glacial lake.[23] Now it has been suggested that they are probably the remains of the primaeval lake. It has taken millions or at least thousands of years for the ice sheets or glaciers to get weakened and contracted year after year till they finally dwindled. They have

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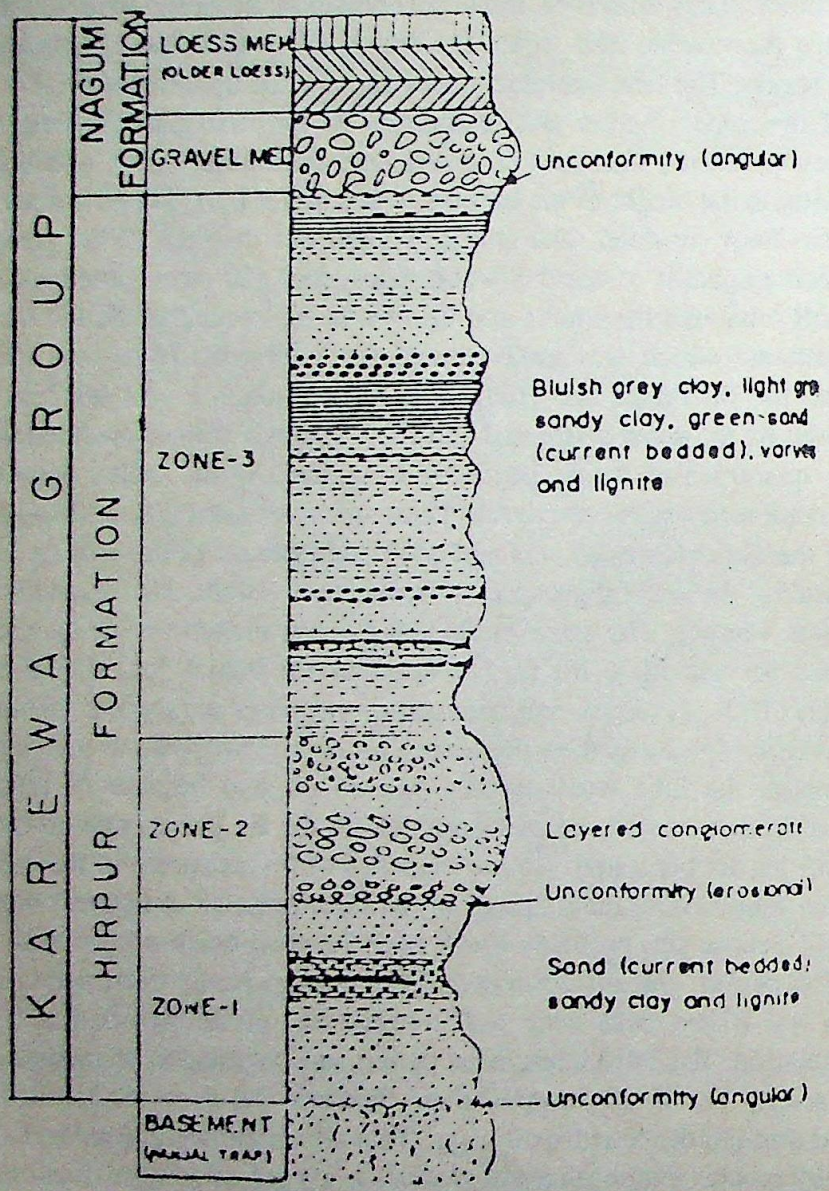

Fig. 2. Karewa beds. Stratigraphical sequence of Karewas (After D.K. Bhat, G.S.I.).

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left behind massive banks, ridges, moraines, clay and gravel or the wind-born deposits, a legacy to the inhabitants of the valley. Climatic pulsation envisaged migration of plant and animal life and the entire question of such changes was not fully solved and as such it did not provide a more solid ground for archaeological research.[24]

More field work was undertaken by Wadia,[25] Farooqi and Desai[26] and others for resolving some of the controversial points raised by De Terra and Paterson's observations. On the basis of the research, the observations were found not altogether convincing. Some useful and informative work on fauna and flora was done by Badam[27] and Vishnu-Mittre[28] which called for further research in the field.

Some workers had suggested that before final drainage of the lake, it had shifted towards the Himalayan side. The first stage they termed as Lower Karewas and the second stage, when the lake shifted to the Himalayan side, as Upper Karewas. A more significant field work duly supported by laboratory data was taken up for detailed mapping of the Karewas. Accordingly the Lower Karewas were termed as Hirpur Formation and Upper Karewas as Nagum Formation. The top member of the Karewas was classified as Loam. The Loam member was also divisible into two, as 'Older Loam' and 'Younger Loam'. In this way stratigraphy of the Karewas and structure pattern of both Hirpur and Nagum Formations were attempted.[29]

With such extensive geological literature available on the vast lake which covered the valley in the pre- and early Quaternary times, the process of its final draining towards the close of the second interglacial, prolonged erosion and terrace formation during the third and fourth glacial and interglacial periods and lake beds represented by Lower and Upper Karewas sealed by aeolian deposit raised more interesting problems. The experts felt an urgent need for a detailed study of palaeoclimatic and palaeoenvironmental changes as recorded in the Karewa profile which, they envisaged, could be unravelled only through a multidisciplinary approach. In doing so it was planned to use both physical and classical techniques to study the sedimentology, the geomorphology, the micropalaeontology, the palynology, the invertebrate and vertebrate palaeontology, the diatoms, the isotopic geochemistry and the chronology of other events. It was proposed that scanning microscopy, mass-spectrometry, radiocarbon, uranium-thorium, thermoluminescence and palaeomagnetic techniques be employed.[30] This certainly posed a national challenge and needed a multi-agency cooperative effort. The pioneering work in this behalf was carried out under Multidisciplinary Kashmir Palaeoclimatic Research Project.[31]

The multi-pronged investigation has provided very useful information of research value on the best preserved and highly fossiliferous Karewa beds of the primaeval lake—the present day remnants of which are the Wular and Dal lakes.[32]

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It has also helped in reconstructing the palaeoclimatic history of the valley for the last four million years which constitutes the minimum age estimate for the initiation of the development of the intermontane basin of Kashmir.[33]

The sediments of Karewa group which occupy the major part of the Kashmir valley represent deposition in a lake complex. These, as such, indicate lacustrine system of deposition. The deposition of the lower part of the Lower Karewa (Hirpur Formation) took place in a vast lake with prominent marginal swamps. Deltas developed into deep waters when the climate was warm and humid. However, the sedimentation was interrupted for some time by a sharp uplift in the Pir Panjal range resulting in the deposition of 200 mts thick conglomerate bed. Again this phase was followed by lacustrine sedimentation which continued upto the end of Lower Karewa deposition. Its upper part is marked by the regression of the lake either due to tectonic activity in the Pir Panjal range or due to the draining out of the lake by the reactivation which were responsible for shrinkage of the lake from the south-western part to the north-eastern part of the valley. The sloping trend of the Karewa belt on the Himalayan side can even now be noticed at Karapur Dam site, 2 kms north of Pakharpura and 5 kms south-east of Pulwama. The dominant grey to bluish colour of the Lower Karewa mudstone accounts for the deposition in a poorly drained basin. On the south-west side of Pir Panjal, along the river Rembiara, the Lower Karewas are well exposed. A type section of these can be examined between Dubjan, Hirpur and Shopian (Pulwama district) though good exposures are available elsewhere.

The lacustrine sedimentation persisted in the Upper Karewas (Nagum Formation) but subsequently depth of the reduced lake tended to be shallower towards the upper part of the Upper Karewa. As against the Lower Karewas no lignite bands were found here and consequently there are no prominent marginal swamps. However, there is evidence that the lake bottom was vegetated.[34] Detailed analysis of Upper Karewas has shown three distinct horizons. The bottom one is of thick lacustrine clay beds having different shades of yellow and grey laminations. This deposit is superimposed by a light brown-pinkish, compacted, unstratified, homogeneous silt about 3 mts thick (loess). The third deposit consists of ash, charcoal and regular floor levels and is referred to as of archaeological origin. In the light of these studies, it has clearly been indicated that the lake bed is covered by a loess deposit and must have accumulated long after the draining of the lake and must have stopped long before the advent of man on the scene as is borne out by its weathered top. The term Karewa, it was suggested, should be restricted to the lake bed (Lower Karewa) and the bottom deposit of the Upper Karewa and the loess to be treated as a separate deposit which is now of late pleistocene and not pleistocene as mentioned by De Terra (1939).[35]

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Both the Lower and Upper Karewas have yielded vertebrate fossils and plant remains. The lower vertebrate fossils consist of fish assemblage as a pointer to an admixture of low altitude (*Cyprinus*) and high altitude (*Schizothorox* and *Oreinus*) varieties; the latter too have been reported from altitudes as high as 3577 mts. On this basis it is obvious that the surrounding mountains were as high during the Karewa deposition. These aquatic varieties inhabited the banks of upland streams, and must have been washed down with similar such remains into low lying Karewa basin, where also fossil remains of *Cyprininae* fish were also recovered. The fossil remains of mammalian fauna consisting mainly of cervus and proboscideans appear in the middle part of a section and are younger than 2.48 million years. Their remains are found in great frequency, which means that large herds of these animals inhabited the grasslands at that time. The low frequency of cervid teeth and bones, but high frequency of antlers (branches of deer's horns), indicate that very few of them died along the lake margin. They probably inhabited the mountain slopes and migrated seasonally to the lake margin and shed their antlers after rutting at the end of winters. This also suggests that the lake margin and surrounding mountains experienced different temperatures.[36] At Sombur near Pampur and at Wapzan (Awantipur canal works) near Bijibehara, dental material assignable to *Elephas hysudricus* has been found. The Sombur locality has yielded a tooth with at least 12 plates where as the Wapzan tooth possesses 13 plates and is best preserved. The occurrence of the remains of *Elephas hysudricus* is suggestive of a lower pleistocene age. On the other hand the concentration of assorted bones in the Nagum lake muds indicates a sort of fluvial transportation.[37] All these events point to repeated and frequent fluctuation in climate. This is established by the presence of fossils of horse (*Equs sivalensis*) from a well stratified deposit which along with the remains of an elephant (*Elephas hysudricus*) have been ascribed to a date younger than 2.48 million years. Their subsequent extinction from the valley is a solid point indicative of the change in climate.[38]

Well-preserved plant remains from various sites have also provided valuable and unmistakable evidence of a common chronological framework of the vegetational changes in relation to climatic amelioration. Positive evidence has come forth from palynological investigations. To quote one instance, Larix fossil remains were found in the earlier stages of Hirpur Formation, which became weak in succeeding zones. Its presence is indicative of a warm temperature and humid climate during the formation of the most recent tertiary deposits (*pleiocene*). With the deterioration of climate and reduction in precipitation, it gradually dwindled down.[39]

Loess the third and the top-most member of the Karewa series has been found for the first time to contain some alternation of multiple dark bands representing palaeosols. In India, Kashmir is the only known region where loess-palaeosol

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31. Sponsored and funded by the Department of Science and Technology, the project was initiated by Prof. D.P. Agrawal of Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad who worked as its Project Director. The Universities of Delhi, Garhwal, Gujarat, Kashmir, Lucknow and Panjab, Geological Survey of India and Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany, Lucknow collaborated in this project.
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33. D.W. Burbank, 'The Age of Karewas, Kashmir as determined from Fission Track dating and Magneto-Stratigraphies,' *Climate and Geology of Kashmir and Central Asia*, p. 23, New Delhi, 1985.
34. I.B. Singh, Facies Analysis of the Karewa Deposits; Abstract of paper presented at International Symposium at Ahmedabad on Palaeoclimatic and Palaeoenvironmental Changes in Asia during Last 4 Million Years, December, 1986.
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37. Ashok Sahni, 'Karewa Vertebrates: Biostratigraphy, Palaeohistology and Palaeoecology', an abstract of paper presented at Kashmir Palaeoclimate Workshop, March 2, 1981.
38. B.S. Kotlia et al., 'Biostratigraphic Faunal Succession and Physical Dating of the Kashmir Karewas,' abstract of paper presented at International Symposium on Palaeoclimatic and Palaeoenvironment . Changes in Asia during the last 4 Million Years, Dec. 1986, Ahmedabad.
39. H.P. Gupta et al, 'Palynostratigraphy and Palaeoenvironments of Kashmir Hirpur Loc. III' in *Current Trends in Geology*, Vol. VI. (Climate and Geology of Kashmir and Central Asia), New Delhi, 1985, 75-90.
40. D.P. Agrawal, 'Cenozoic Climate Changes in Kashmir: The Multidisciplinary Date', in *Climate and Geology of Kashmir and Central Asia*, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 1-12.
41. A.E. Dodonov, 'The Quaternary Stratigraphy and Geological Events in Soviet Central Asia,' paper presented at the International Symposium on Palaeoclimatic and Palaeoenvironmental Changes in Asia during the last 4 million years, December, 1986, Ahmedabad, p. 17.
42. Sheela Kusumgar, D.P. Agrawal, Navin Juyal and Prabhakar Sharma, 'Palaeosols within Loess: Dating Palaeoclimatic Events in Kashmir,' *Radiocarbon*, Vol. 28, No. 2A, 1986, pp. 561-565.

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3
Emergence of Early Man

A. LITERARY TRADITIONS

It became clear that the literary material regarding the land formation of the valley was not altogether irrelevant in the light of the scientific investigations carried out from time to time by the experts. In fact evidence from literary materials available is corroborated to a great extent by archaeological findings. In discussing the origin of the people who might have lived in the valley whenever it was climatically favourable for them to do so, it would be worthwhile to refer once again to the literary sources.

According to known literary works, the original settlers are named as Nagas and Pisachas, the progeny of sage Kashayapa (after whom the valley of Kashmir is traditionally named) from his two wives referred to as *Kadru* and *Krodha*. Whatever their origin, they are said to have close association with the people living in the neighbouring countries. They used to go to these countries periodically and return to the valley whenever the climatic conditions were favourable. In this way, despite mountainous barriers, there was continuous movement of the people coming into and leaving out of the valley. Both the tribes inhabited the valley on different occasions. The Nagas lived during summer months and the Pisachas occupied it in winter season.[1] The Pisachas were nomads whose original home was far away in the desert regions of Central Asia. They never remained in peace with the Nagas. The Nagas were brought over here mainly to give resistance to the contemptuous Pisachas who had already occupied a sizable portion of the land over the mountains. At the time of desiccation of the lake water, it is said in the *Nilmata Purana*, that the human beings were terrified by the violent rush of the water. It then makes it out that the valley floor, even during or after the drainage, was still swampy at the time of the visit of the Pisachas who had taken up their positions over the mountains or on the tops of the exposed Karewas. In that case, they only could be the original settlers of the land. Their supremacy could be eliminated only when the Nagas and other human beings came closer and pacified the Pisachas to

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allow them to live in peace. The close intercourse of the people with the people of the adjacent regions resulted in the amalgamation of customs, rituals and traditions. The mention of these tribes is found in other Indian literary sources also. The Pisachas are said to be evil spirited beings like Rakshasas whom Indra fought, killing many of them.[2] They were, therefore, regarded as demons or goblins.[3] In *Taittriya Samhita*, it is said that gods alongside men fought against Rakshasas, Asuras and the Pisachas.[4] They roam in the woods and flee from each village.[5] They are treated as enemies of mankind and in the *Atharvaveda* again, a hymn runs thus:

Pisachas ruiners are thou,
Give me strength to drive Pisachas off.
—(A.V.II. 18)

Other Puranas describe them as flesh eaters and as evil-minded people, addicted to evil habits and drinking blood. They were homeless, wrapped themselves with the skin of animals and had long hairs.[6] They were not treated with respect in any country because of their evil habits and impurity. They lived and behaved like savage and nomadic people living in hilly regions; and stood identified as a monstrous tribe inhabiting mountainous regions beset with dense forests. They were contemporaneous with the Nagas and other tribes.[7] The Nagas are referred to as a civilized tribe compared to Pisachas. Bracketed with Asuras, they are of respectable parentage.[8]

The Nagas in Kashmir, and in the rest of India as well, represent the continuing cultural life of considerable utility. The Naga worship typified by snake motifs had its earliest known form in Mesopotamia and it was, of course, wide-spread in many versions in India. It travelled to Central Asia and from there to China and Indonesia. In isolated instances it is found that Indian motifs are even found as far away as New Guinea and Australia. The true Indian Naga is the many headed serpent.[9] The earliest reference in India is found in the faience sealing at Mohenjodaro where a kneeling supplicant is shown before a many-hooded cobra suggestive of Naga worship.[10] This evidence had led many scholars to believe that Naga cult was purely non-Aryan in origin. In whatever part of the world wherever there are snakes, snake worship is practised in one form or the other. "There is no reason whatsoever for supposing that the Vedic people alone had to borrow a feeling of fear and awe for those mysterious creatures from their non-Aryan neighbours."[11] Whatever the origin of the cult, it is generally believed that in the Vedic times serpent worship was not only known but prevalent.[12]

Naga worship in Vedic period was derived from the worship of 'Ahi-Budhnya' (the serpent of the deep) and has been referred to twelve times in the *Rigveda* itself. This 'Ahi-Budhnya' is a divine being, and is invoked to 'rejoice' and gladden the

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hearts of his worshippers. His blessings are desired 'as a boon for suppliants'.[13] In the *Yajurveda* or the *Atharvaveda* or in post-Vedic literature like Samhitas, Brahmanas and Grahsutras, 'Ahi Budhnya' has been mentioned as a semi-divine being with great respect and devotion. It is here that the root of 'serpent worship' lies and became so deep-rooted that it could not be eradicated in India.[14] The name of 'Ahi-Budhnya' was used also for Rudra as well as for Lord Shiva.[15] Contrary to this, it was said that similarity of notions or ideas did not always indicate their origin from any particular common people, tribe or race.[16] The Nagas who lived in north India were of Turanian race and were conquered by the war-liking Aryans. Serpent worship was said to be 'an out-crop from the underlying strata of the population'.[17] The home of Serpent worshippers was in Central Asia along with those of the Scythians, from where they originated.[18] It was also said that they were of the prehistoric times and were Sun worshippers whose emblem was Naga or the hooded serpent.[19] The Nagas were serpent worshipping non-Aryan tribes of ancient India. The worship of serpents was popular in all parts of the country. There are epigraphic, numismatic and literary evidences to show that there were Naga people in different parts of the country. Naga dynasties became powerful in the time of the later Kushanas.[20] Dr. Jayaswal while giving the chronology of one of the dynasties of Vidisa names its first king as Sesha Naga in 110-90 B.C. He says further, 'The foundations of modern Hinduism were laid by the Naga emperors and that edifice was reared by Vakatakas and elaborated by the Guptas'.[21] Nagas were speakers of Burushaski language and occupied the valley before the advent of the Darad speaking people who were none other than Pisachas.[22] It has also been maintained that the Pisachi or Daradic language undoubtedly belonged to Aryan stock.[23] Referring to the Nagas of Kashmir, it is said that they were aboriginals and lived in the valley before the advent of the Aryans. They were driven out of the valley by the Pisachas at the advent of winter, who used to come over here in great numbers to save themselves from the cool and inhospitable reaches of Karakoram and Pamir regions of Central Asia.[24]

These conflicting views only refer to some ancient beliefs or the typical cultural life of the prehistoric people who came to the valley after the climatic conditions were favourable or in the later phase when the lake was finally drained off. The two groups of Nagas and Pisachas need to be distinguished from one another. Where and when they made their contribution in building the ancient history of Kashmir will have to be studied afresh in the light of the authentic sources of the archaeological pursuits undertaken in the valley recently. We gather from the records that there was continuous movement of the people following the desiccation of the lake. The ice age had practically come to an end and there were no icy or cool winds during winter months as compared to the regions of Central Asia. Both the tribes

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used to live in the valley for six months each. Pisachas lived during winter months and Nagas during summer months. The people were, therefore, awfully oppressed physically and even mentally burdened in their frequent movements over hazardous and high forested mountains. Besides, the Nagas resisted to settle with barbarous, evil minded and uncivilized group of Pisachas and expressed that they would like to live with other, obviously less ferocious, group of 'Manvas' or human beings. It is at this stage that the literary account tells us that the immigration of human beings took place probably from warmer countries. Both the Nagas and fresh arrivals pleased the Pisachas with meat, which they liked very much. Interestingly enough, this tradition is still followed by the locals of the valley on the 15th dark fortnight of *Pausa* (December) yearly. On this day they celebrate the festival known as *Khichri-amavasya. Khichri* with meat is kept outside the house late in the evening, so as to please these troublesome people even now. After a stay of six months in the valley, another festival on their departure was observed. This was known as 'Pisacha Prayana' or the departure of Pisachas. On this occasion they were served with dried food which could last long for their mountainous journey. The Nagas and the fresh immigrants were then breathing a sigh of relief and after bidding them farewell, they enjoyed within themselves by singing and dancing.[25] In absence of Pisachas, Nagas with the fresh arrivals had a peaceful time and tried hard for the prosperity and happiness of the people. Narrating this period, the author of *Nilamata Purana* writes that the valley was holy, thickly populated, beneficial for living beings, capable of providing grains, devoid of dangers, endowed with gardens and pleasure groves. If such a situation hints at the natural and environmental surroundings of the period referred to in the Purana soon after the draining out of the lake, it does not hold good since one cannot visualise such a superb achievement of the original settlers of the valley at that time. The author of the Purana has, perhaps, highlighted here the economic prosperity of his own times (6th-7th century A.D. or slightly earlier) when for the first time cereals in the valley show consistently high values and the period is attributed to high agricultural activity. Investigation in vegetational history shows this period as of maximum farming stage.[26] It is by unravelling the tangled mass of these accounts, myths, beliefs or rituals that we can trace the ancient history of Kashmir, of course, with the help of much neglected evidence which has come to surface now.

The origin of Pisacha legend as given in *Nilamata Purana* and referred to by Kalhana could be attributed to prehistoric period.[27] It has been seen that the primitive cultures of the valley were vital and dynamic and were engaged in a continuous process of growth. These became assimilated with other cultural waves coming over here from neighbouring regions for a considerable period of time. The ancestors of all human beings at one time, Kashmir not being an exception, were hunters.

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To know the history of the development of human culture in the valley, we have to take the hunting culture as its starting point. By and by, man made enormous strides forward facing great challenges from nature. The change in climate radically altered his living conditions. As and when warmth increased, he looked for new avenues to make his living more secure and independent. Even as a hunter he could devise the earliest form of religion. The worship of the rain-god, the great Naga was the origin of the worship since the early man thought that he alone sends rain which makes the earth capable of producing life and causes the seed to sprout and grow.[28] The entire thought of the prehistoric man was dominated by animals since he made no distinction between them and himself. In his earlier art, even men were transformed into animals. By symbolic actions, he tried to comprehend his environment around him. After the desiccation of the lake and the emergence of river Jhelum around 85 kyr, there were numerous isolated, small or big lakes left bare and these were attributed to Nagas since the prehistoric men thought that these alone will secure success in their hunting. Their presence was taken as a mark of fruitfulness, prosperity and growth. These tutelary gods were given human characters.[29] Numerous motifs of Naga representation are found in the early art of China[30] and elsewhere but no such motif has been found in Kashmir though presence of such snake carvings is reported to be in existence even during the reign of Akbar the Great.[31] Their blissful memory is extant even today. No one dares to catch fish from the springs where they grow in abundance, and the top head cover with a broad hood like mouth of a snake with a long hanging perpendicular tail is still being used, though now in very rare cases, by the old ladies of the valley. Uraeus snake emblem was worn by the Phoenician and Egyptian kings as a sign of royal authority.[32] It is how the early people used old stories, myths and traditions to fit into new beliefs and new series of the events.

Most of these observations pertain to prehistory and direct or indirect references to early literary records only portray the struggle for existence and rivalries of the early settlers of the valley. A major work awaits the turn of the spade as the ground work has been done in relation to climatic fluctuations, discovery of loess-palaeosol sequence, sedimentation of the lake beds with connected fauna and flora assemblages. The results of this pioneering work are encouraging.

The characteristic features and the living pattern of Pisachas resemble with the people of stone age culture, definite proof of which is coming now from the prehistoric sites of the valley. The events unfolded in the recent past combined with the fascination for mysteries have awakened a unique interest for knowing the ancient history of Kashmir—a stage which it never held previously. Difficulties had stood so far in the way of a clear interpretation of its history. All about the early man was obscure. Cultural information is still scanty but in view of the diversified studies

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undertaken by different agencies in the valley, some recognizable data have been recorded. Now entirely a new outlook has been added to the economic and social life of the ancient man of Kashmir, many errors stand corrected, truth about the written traditions confirmed and finally pushed back the history of the valley by thousands of years before the development of writing.

B. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

1. Palaeolithic Period

It is difficult to draw a line marking the emergence of man. He started right from his animal inheritance and in course of time, stage by stage, developed a large variety of remarkably efficient tools and weapons, learnt to cover his body with the skin and took to settled community life. Material culture in whatever form left over the centuries, surviving the natural process of destruction and decay is the best and the only way to get information about the prehistoric or non-literate people outside the range of written history.

The first information came about the probable existence of prehistoric remains in the valley when a well fossilized tusk fragment was found on the way to the Mohammedan shrine of Baba Rafi-ud-Din situated on an isolated hill at a height of 628′ above the valley floor. Besides, topmost deposit yielded limbs of bovids (antelope and Bos) which were half fossilized. One femur bone bore marks of artificial cutting attempted by a blunt knife. This was presumed by the explorers to have come from kitchen midden. This according to them was the prospective field for the palaeolithic man.[33] Discovery of a patinated flake, made of trap and reworked at a later date, near Kargil was said to have been brought by a prehistoric wanderer or might have been carried over there by a member of same people who settled on the lower Jhelum near Pampur where flake implements were obtained in the brown clay overlying the lake bed about 12′ above the stream which corresponds to the lowest terrace level found along the Jhelum and its tributaries. These flakes were said to belong to middle palaeolithic times. Especially the tool at Kargil was reported to be one of the best specimens since it was unmistakably regarded as humanly worked flake implement. It also carried its own historical importance as the area lies just beyond the main Himalayan flank on the ancient route over the Zojila pass (on way to Ladakh).[34] In spite of these stray finds, it was not confirmed if prehistoric man of palaeolithic times did appear in the valley till the end of ice age when it was freed from ice and snow. It was, however, maintained that during second inter-glaciation there was a favourable habitat for man to roam about.[35] Earliest Stone Age tools were found in the sub-Himalayan valleys (north of Kashmir) of the Indus and its tributary the Soan (or Sohan) in the Potwar area centred about Rawalpindi in

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Fig. 3. Prehistoric style of life.

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Pakistan.[36] Though found in a similar situation as that of Kashmir, the palaeolithic remains discovered by the same team led by the Yale Cambridge Expedition provided the main source material for the study of archaeological data in relation to different terraces of the river and co-related these with glacial and inter-glacial phases. The tools were categorised as pre-Soan, early Soan and late Soan on the basis of technological features.[37] Even the only palaeolithic site at Shanghaq near Mardan in the former North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan excavated by Prof. Dani has been correlated with Terrace I of Kashmir.[38]

A detailed and accurate study of the glaciation sequence was taken up as early as 1928 in the Liddar valley by Grinlinton[39] which was further elaborated and co-related by De Terra and Paterson in 1935. A boulder found by Grinlinton looked like 'almost hand made.'[40] Initiated by this observation, Prof. H.D. Sankalia assisted by two experts from Archaeological Survey of India[41] took up the field work of the Liddar valley in 1969. At Pahalgam (65 kms from Srinagar) on the right bank of river Liddar, the first palaeolithic tool represented by a huge massive flake (255 cm long and 10 cm broad) was found in the exposed section. Two distinct flake scars were noticed on both sides of the tool. A large diffused bulb of percussion on the under-surface just near the two consecutive scars was observed. The process of flaking gave a long and sinuous edge for cutting and scrapping. The tool was noticed to be a man-made artefact. Another tool of crude hand axe was spotted at a much higher level at the junction of the boulder conglomerate and the brown clay. Step flaking was noticed on it. The butt (back side) was slightly trimmed for a suitable handhold and looked like a pear-shaped bifacial tool commonly known as hand axe. From a similar deposit man-made tools were obtained from other localities in Punjab, and were attributed to the second glacial period in Kashmir. Since Pahalgam was first glaciated, Sankalia thought that in this period the entire valley was under a thick mantle of ice making it well nigh impossible for the survival of any fauna or flora and so also for man. He, therefore attributed these tools, the earliest one in Asia, to first interglacial period saying that environmentally this period of glaciation was the best suitable period for man to be in the Kashmir valley. In support of this he wrote that at that time the climatic conditions in the valley, on the foothills and the Punjab plains were more or less similar.[42] The Pir Panjal range which now towers over 4,770 metres was considerably lower by about 2,700 metres. As a result of this, the summer rains reached the valley and there was abundance of pine, oak and cinnamon trees. These are now confined to Murry and Shimla hills, and grow still northwards. Elephants of the Upper Siwalik type, deer and other mammals and birds inhabited lake shores and valleys in Kashmir, whereas the foothills were inhabited by large cats, elephants, horses, pigs, hippopotamus and cercopithecoid monkeys.[43] Sankalia and other members of his team

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from Deccan College, Poona combed the area further and found a pointed tool, six choppers and three scrapers from the area. These were categorised as early palaeolithic tools. Since these occurred at the junction of the boulder bed and the overlying sand and clays, it was suggested that the climate at the time of the occupation of the valley by man during early palaeolithic times was quite congenial. Instead of lower pleistocene these were assigned to a middle pleistocene age.[44] These renowned archaeologists had been extremely efficient and productive at interpretation of the finds and the associated sequence. Their observations, however, rapidly prompted many other archaeologists from India and abroad to probe the area further but without getting any convincing tools. In support of this it was emphasized that the palaeoecology of the Himalayan flank shows that its steep sides must have been washed by the Nagum lake as against the Pir Panjal flank where the tectonic uplift had raised up the lake sediment to provide land for animals and plants. There was as such no flat land available on the Himalayan side till the Nagum lake also drained out. Hence doubts were raised about the genuineness of these tools.

In striking contrast to the Himalayan flank, the first survey on the Pir Panjal side yielded palaeoliths from Balapura (top terrace of Rembiara river) in Shopian tehsil, district Pulwama.[45] A well worked out chopper tool with distinct flake scars was also picked up from the upper reaches of Sukhnag situated on Srinagar-Poonch link road to the east of Pir Panjal range.

The presence of such tools in the valley are termed as occurrences but not the sites.[46] There has been lot of erosion, denundation and other types of natural calamities and man-made destruction which have destroyed the structural or sequential system of these locations. The great and amazing drawback has been that actually the higher reaches of the valley have not yet systematically been explored. Sporadic explorations at Balapura or Sukhnag have been rewarding and further research is full of promise.[47] A distinct blade and burin industry is now reported for the first time which has an Upper Palaeolithic affiliation (dated c. 18,000 B.P.).[48]

At Sombur, 12 miles south-east of Srinagar more than 100 artefacts were collected, demonstrating the use of prepared core technique in fabrication. Two retouched types noticed are: (i) utilization and (ii) voluntary. Based on Jasper, silicious limestone and trap, the main tool types are burins, points and borers. The percentage of utilized flakes and also the number of tools in Jasper was greater than the other two varieties of raw material.

A new lithic industry was also found at some of the newly discovered sites like Kulladur, Bhatchak, Tapriballa, Huin in Baramulla district, Khan Sahib and Hab Shah Sahib in Badgam district. The surfaces of these stones are littered with thermally fractured stones and tools made on flakes and cores. The three tool types constituting the Aceramic industry are represented by backed knives, elongated parallel

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Fig. 4. Process of roasting of meat (prehistoric people) in the valley.

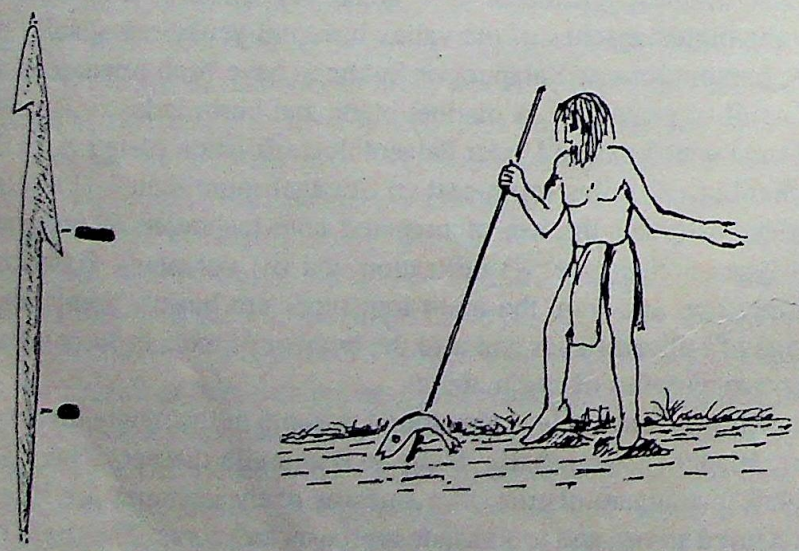

Fig. 5. A prehistoric man using bone harpoon for fishing.

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sided double scrappers and waisted tools. Grinders and pounders are also part of this industry. The peculiarity of the finds that polished tools are almost absent. Further, an interesting observation was that at some of these sites, a lithic industry marked by the huge chopper like discoidal cores, borers, flake knives and scrappers was found associated with the typical Neolithic industry. A detailed examination of the tools showed that there is a succession of Stone Age industries going back to the palaeolithic times. The Neolithic culture also shows distinct signs of evolution, spatial differentiation and technological affinities with the preceding Stone Age cultures.[49] This period, 20,000-18,000 B.P. was of climatic amelioration in the valley represented by broad leaved elements showing a dominance in the pollen spectra, and palaeosols developing all over the Karewa plateaus. This stage also shows domination of C3 type plants. It is during such optimum climatic conditions that human settlements thrived in the valley as is indicated by Upper Palaeolithic sites from Sombur and other areas.[50] The presence of man at this stage also cannot, therefore, be ruled out.

Man in whatever capacity lived in the valley, he invariably had to adjust his way of life in the new conditions dictated by his changed environment. There was progressive extinction of big game. There was no significant growth in his population. Mainly isolation played a vital role. They were primarily hunters. In killing the beasts of prey they must have used crude types of flakes, unpolished hand-axes, grinders or even pounders. In absence of any fishing tool, they must have caught the fish by means of dams made of branches of trees or stones. Grind stones must have been also used for crushing the wild fruits, skins of animals must have been used to cover their bodies and also for preparation of baskets or bags for fetching water, wild fruits or roots some of which still grow at the wildlife sanctuary at Dachigam about 25 kms to the north-east of Srinagar must have served as their food. In absence of any evidence of their shelter, it appears that they never lived at one place for long and were always on the move. Still they must have erected temporary huts of stones and logs of wood with one central pole and four poles of equal sizes on the corners. The roof could have been covered with birch bark and wild grass. Tradition of erecting such types of huts called *kothas* are built by Gujjars when in summer they go on the higher plateaus for grazing of their cattle, even now. Such temporary shelters must have been utilised by the primitive men only during rainy days otherwise they must have been accustomed to pass their days joyfully in the open around a communal fire. Mostly dependent on the flesh of animals or fish, roaming from one region to another and above all shelterless leave little doubt that the characteristic features and the living pattern of these people resembled with the literary description of the Pisachas. Different layers of loess-paleosol sequence in Central Asia, Potwar region of Pakistan, China have yielded

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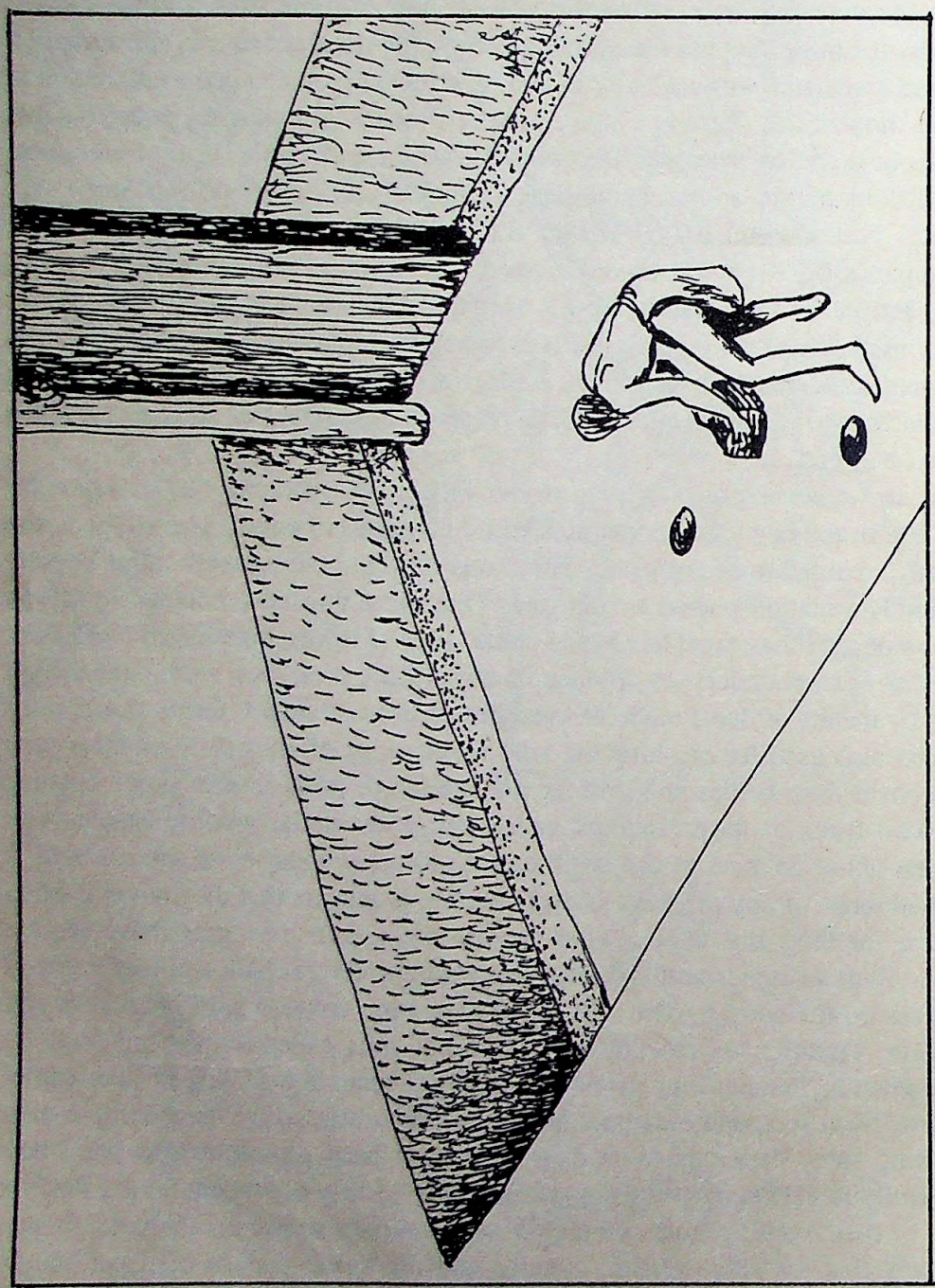

Fig. 6. Settlement pattern of prehistoric people.

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Paleolithic tools[51] but such recently discovered exposures in the valley have not yet been examined or excavated. Pending that one has to rely on the surface collections only.

The first Upper Palaeolithic dwelling in Russia is at Gagarino. It consisted of a shallow scooped out pit oval in plan. The roof was supported on poles covered by branches of the trees or animal skins. Five such earth houses and several dug out storage pits were found at Timonoka also. Besides winter houses represented by these pits, traces of hearths were found near the mouths of the pits which suggest that the people lived in the open air and also prepared their food by the camp fire. The people as such enjoyed the environment in which warmth loving animals and plants lived.[52] Our ancestors in the neolithic period in the valley also used such very types of dwellings.

Prior to Neolithic tradition, palaeoclimatic research has shown that around 10,000 B.P. cooler conditions prevailed in the valley.[53] This is the conventional starting point of Holcene (recent) period. The period witnessed excessive rains which resulted in the tremendous erosion of the land forcing the people to move to sub-Himalayan regions or the Gobi deserts of Central Asia. Such cold conditions must have also been responsible for the extinction of such animals like elephants or the horses whose fossil remains have been obtained from the Karewa beds. On the archaeological side, it is also substantiated by the absence of Mesolithic industry. However by 5,000 B.P., again climatic conditions became warmer.[54] More people came over here in large numbers with sophisticated and effective hunting techniques. They were not only hunters now but primitive farmers as well. They thus entered into the Neolithic age the remains of which are spread far and wide.

2. Neolithic Period

The Neolithic settlement is now very well documented and densely distributed. These sites so far located occupy the tops of the plateaus invariably overlooking either some perennial streams or the rivers or at some places low marshy lands. The sites located on the Himalayan flank are represented by the Megaliths lying over the Neolithic remains while on the Pir Panjal side, these are mostly devoid of such monuments over the surfaces.

This culture shows an important change in the way of life of the early man almost in the changed climatic and environmental conditions. He invented ground and polished tool technology, discovered the means of food production, started domestication of animals especially that of the dog who was the best companion in his hunting; invented pottery, and started settling down in villages. The significant feature of the cultural material is that it had two horizons categorised as 'Neolithic

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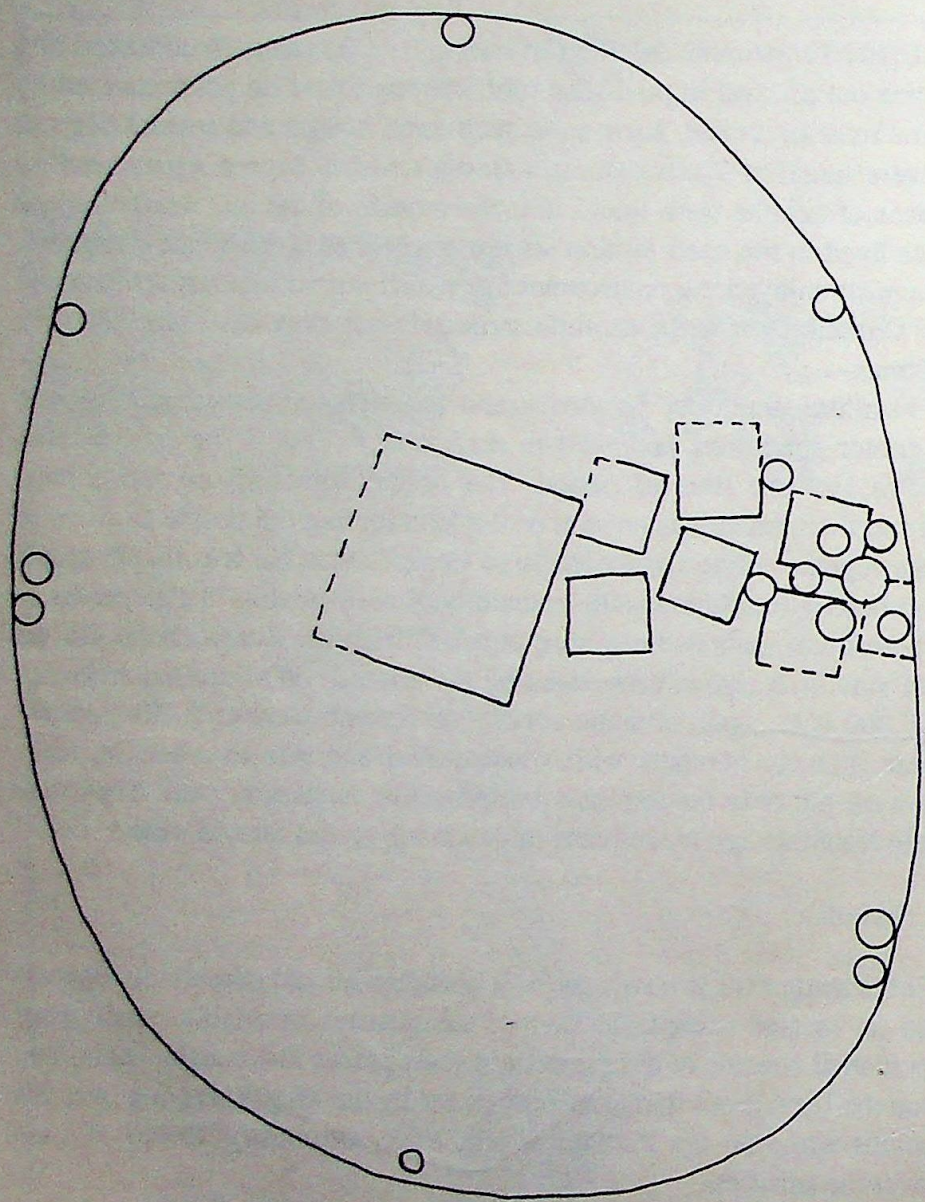

Fig. 7. Circular and rectangular house plans from excavated site at Burzahom (early Burzahom period).

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Culture in Aceramic levels' and 'Neolithic Culture in Ceramic levels'.

Besides, the peculiarity of the culture lies in that it bears no origin or the affinity with similar cultures found in the Indian sub-continent and as such is termed as a distinct 'Northern Neolithic Culture'.

The Neolithic settlements are found over the top of the loess deposit which according to C^{14} dates pre-dates these settlements and is not contemporaneous with its formation. In earlier exploration, these were spotted at village Baimlun (Wangat Nalla), Nunar (above Ganderbal), and at Burzahom near Srinagar.[55] Burzahom was reported to be the only site of its kind in the north where Megaliths were located. A systematic survey undertaken in the valley of Jhelum from Anantnag to Pampur resulted in the location of series of such settlements at Jayadevi-Udar, Thajiwor (near Bijibehara, Anantnag), Gufkral, Begagund, Dadsar, Hariparigom, Olchibagh, Panchgom, Pampur, Sempur and Sombur[56] (all now in Pulwama district). This was followed by other sites at Gurhoma Sangri, near the Wular lake, Damodar Karewa south-west of Srinagar, Brah 9.6 kms above the archaeological monument at Martand, Waztal 3 kms inside Srinagar-Pahalgam road above sacred spring at Mattan.[57] The experts of the Palaeoclimatic Project during the course of their Survey explored numerous Neolithic sites at Pinglish, Romu, Shehpendur, Balapur (Pulwama district), Hab Shah Sahib, Hayatpur, Qalishpur, Khan Sahib, Kosh Hund, Kaneer (Bagdam district), Kriri Chak, Kulladur, Mukam Udar, Tapribala, Wanigom, Yeh Teng, Gopas Udar, Rai Teng, Kanishpur and Huin (Baramulla district).[58] A significant discovery of the recent years was the location of such sites at Dragtiyung near Prang and at the nearby site at Kijpora on the confluence of river Sindh and Kranknadi or Karankanadi (ancient Karnakavahini). Both the sites lie on the ancient route of Srinagar-Leh highway.[59] Prior to this similar remains were spotted at Kanishpur and Huin on Srinagar-Baramulla highway. Both these routes are of great historical importance. The former closely follows the course of river Jhelum and crossing over Urusha (modern Hazara) leads to North West Frontier Province of Pakistan (Gandhara) and then to Iran on the one side and on the other to Afghanistan and further to Central Asia. It is through this very route also known in ancient times as the Western Gate of Kashmir that Hieun Tsang entered the valley. The other route crossing over the Zojila connects Kashmir with Ladakh and then with Tibet, Central Asia and China. This route was followed by great adventurers like Rinchana (14th century), Mirza Haider Dughlat (16th century) who have at their respective levels changed the course of history of the valley. With the discovery of neolithic material on these routes, it undoubtedly makes it clear that both the routes were most important thoroughfares during prehistoric times.[60]

The archaeological investigation reveals now that Kashmir had a highly developed neolithic culture spread throughout the length and breadth of the valley.

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In order to know the origin, diffusion and the development of such a culture it is but necessary that serious attempts are made to uncover any of these potential sites. It is only then that datable evidence comes forth regarding the people, their houses, the amenities they enjoyed and the economic conditions they had to undergo to sustain themselves. The site at Burzahom near Srinagar was partially excavated by the explorers themselves in 1935.[61]

Burzahom (lat 34° 10′ N, long 74° 54′ E) is situated at a distance of 24 kms north-east of Srinagar. The site can be approached through two routes. One goes through the Mughal gardens of Nishat and Shalimar and the other leads to the place through the famous shrine of Hazaratbal and University complex. Both the routes from either side of the Dal Lake lead to Nagin-Shalimar link road and the site of Burzahom lies just half a kilometre inside this link road at the back of Telbal village. The site capped by Megaliths lies in the characteristically flat Karewa terrain of the Kashmir valley and is about 0.50 sq kms in the aerial extent representing an eroded and much denuded remnant of a river terrace of Dagwan Nallah that drains the slopes of Dachigam Wildlife Sanctuary. On its east lies the glaciated peak of Mahadev mountain of the Great Himalayan range and on its south lies the Dal lake. The original extension of the mound must have been cut by the Dagwan Nallah which now is named after the village Telbal as Telbal Nallah. However, its bed must have provided an important source of livelihood and economy for the neolithic people of Kashmir.

The results of trial excavations taken up to the south of one of the standing megaliths revealed a cultural picture from top to bottom as:

Layer A Potsherds belonging to the Buddhist site of Harwan 4th century A.D.

Layer B Highly black polished ware and potsherds with incised geometric designs belonging to either a late or an early phase of Indus valley cultures which range from 3000 to 1800 B.C.

Layer C Kitchen level in unweathered loess with polished bone and stone tools and pottery. This was presumed to be the oldest agricultural period in Mesopotamia range from 4000 to 6000 B.C.

This was the tentative assessment of the excavators and suggested for further excavations at the site.[62]

No definite date was assigned to the loessic deposit and it was presumed that the beginning of this neolithic culture must have been still earlier. Arguing against this highly exaggerated version, it was stressed by Stuart Piggot that there is no valid reason for regarding Kashmir Neolithic of any proven antiquity beyond first millennium B.C.[63] All over India, its importance was regarded to be of a unique character as it was presumed to be the only site of its type prior to the extensive

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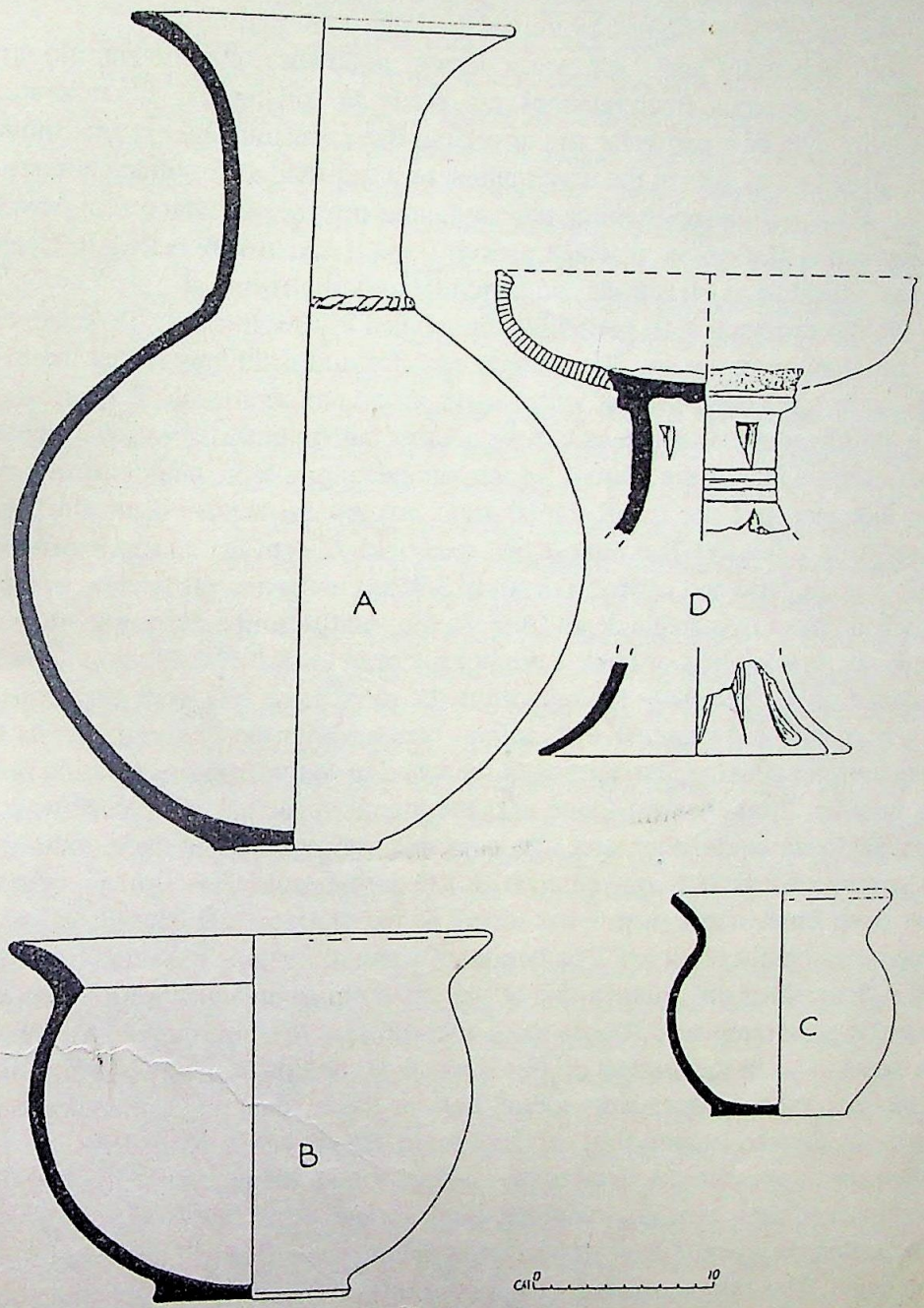

Fig. 11. Pottery shapes (neolithic period II) from Burzahom excavations.

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exploration conducted in the valley.[64] The serious work of excavation at this site was taken up only in 1960-61 by the Archaeological Survey of India.[65]

The excavations lasted for over a decade. In absence of sufficient information available, numerous interpretations are made in solving the chronological or sequential data of a particular site or region. Both isolation and external influence have played a key role in the development of a full-fledged neolithic culture in the valley. Four periods representing the continuous process of development have been recognized at Burzahom of which periods I and II exclusively belong to Neolithic period, period III to Megalithic and period IV to Early Historical.

On the structural side, period I is represented by dwelling pits. These are circular, rectangular or square. The characteristic feature of the pits is that these were dug out in the loessic deposit which is the virgin soil at the site. The circular pits were narrower at the top, so as to have a lesser but an intact portion to cover these. These were wider at the bottom for accommodating a large number of occupants. The diameter and the depth varied from one pit to another depending on the strength of a family. The largest one measured 2.74 m at the top expanding to 4.57 m at the base and carried a depth of 3.95 m. In deeper pits landing steps were provided upto a reasonable depth from the top and for further descent to the bottom of the pit, wooden logs or ladders might have been used. Invariably post holes were provided on the periphery for supporting the roof. Some pits were interconnected. Layers of ash and charcoal with animal bones within the pits suggest that these were used for cooking and burning of the wood to warm themselves during inclement weather. Stone hearths found near the mouth of the pits with shallow storage pits, 60-91 cm in diameter, and side lanes in close proximity to these, indicate that the people preferred or enjoyed open air life during sunny days. Animal bones and also bone implements were encountered in the storage pits. Interiors of the pits were occasionally plastered. The bottom of some of the pits had a thin layer of red ochre floor. Over this floor in one of the pits horns of an antler were found which normally were preserved for the tools after utilising flesh of the hunt for food and the skins to wrap themselves in. For sharpening the tips of the tools while staying in the pits, rubber stones were found. Besides these, some pits had conical and irregularly dressed stones 0.91 to 1.51 m in length and 0.22 to 0.44 cm wide. Wherever these were discovered, they were lying on the bottom of the pits. These might have been used for reclining purpose and depict some sort of a mental satisfaction they would have derived after the pits were finally made ready for their habitation. This task warranted strenuous efforts on their behalf in scooping out the loessic deposit. Such pits had clear cut celt marks on the sides. In such pits whose sides were plastered, no such conical stones were found. It appears that these were subsequently removed after the pits were plastered. As compared to these circular

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pits, the square or rectangular pits which more or less looked like Pit chambers, were shallower. The number of these structures was larger on the north of the Megalithic complex than on its south. Still a very representative type of the pit was encountered on the south also. This pit extended in three trenches and measured 6.40 × 7.0 m with a depth of over one and a half metres. The occupational deposits were found to dip towards the centre of the pit where a hearth circular on plan was also detected. A noteworthy feature was that a drain type of depression was running all round the walls of the pit with deep post holes in the corners. These post holes and the drains must have been a source of support for the scooped out walls of the pit and also for providing the superstructure to serve as a cover. In one of the posts, a sizable quantity of burnt wood was found. The charred pieces of the wood so encountered were recognised to be of Pine wood (*Pinus*). The wooden posts supported the roof of the birch (bark of *Betula utilis*) with that of hay—the charred remains of which were also found in a crescent shaped storage pit. The birch tree is a moderate sized deciduous tree which commonly grows in the Himalayas between 3,000 mts and 4,200 mts altitude. The nearest source to Burzahom was the mountain range of Mahadev, 25 kms towards east.[66] Until recently birch was the main roofing material in the region and the valley as well. Quite likely the birch brought over from higher reaches was stocked at the village of Burzahom which in Kashmiri language means the place of *burj* (birch). A series of such shallow pits or pit chambers though smaller in dimensions, was discovered to the north of the Magalithic complex. All these were provided with drains, post holes, and hearths (both of clay and stone lined). The presence of the post holes on either sides of the hearths in these pits points out that these were primarily used for roasting of the meat. The significant addition on this side of the area was that stone querns with pounders were found within the pit chambers.

The representation of these pits carry great significance in as much as these provide an insight into the economy of the people who inhabited these. Some of the deeper oval pits yielded pottery of the succeeding periods and on that analogy it was presumed that instead of dwellings these were utilised for killing the game. This argument does not hold justification, because traces of red ochre sealing these pits were also encountered and there are clear stratigraphic sequence discernible which make it out that these earliest oval pits were sealed by floor levels of the period. The stone wall ascribable to period III seals both the cultural deposits of period II as well as the dwelling pits. Besides, there are obvious reasons that due to excessive rains and snow, the deposits within some of the deeper pits got easily sunk resulting in the intermingling of the earlier and later deposits. The people had a far advanced method of killing the game. They had bows, arrows, spears and other sophisticated tools, depicted by them in their art on a stone slab and as such

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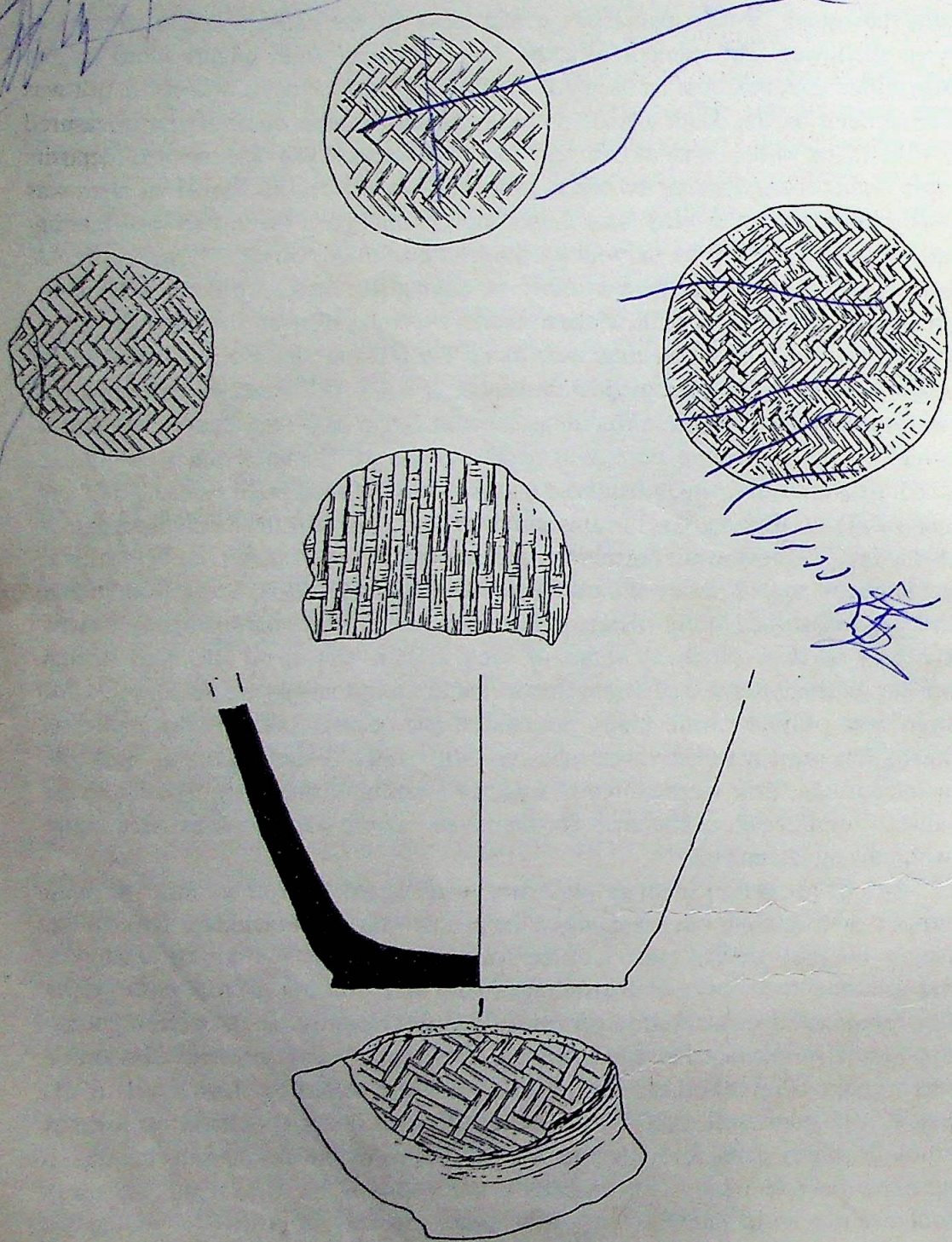

Fig. 12. Designs of mat impressions on the bases of pots and manufacturing techniques.

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would not have resorted to the crude killing of the game as presumed. However, now the excavations at an another site of Gufkral have also confirmed the presence of dwelling pits and as such has put an end to the after thought presumptions of the experts.

In the next stage of neolithic period II, these dwelling pits were filled up and rammed with red ochre and used as ground floor in their changed structural pattern represented by houses or mud platforms or mud walls. The floor levels carried required series of post holes also. In one of the largest area of the floor level measuring 3.96 × 1.21 m encountered at a depth of 2.13 m below the surface, a series of 45 post holes were encountered which suggest some sort of a community structure. This was provided with an elaborate system of roofing with timber and birch bark. Due provision of hearths both of clay and stone lined, querns and mullers were found in the houses. Mid-levels of this period witnessed a devastation by fire since a thick charcoaly and ashy layer was seen running through almost the entire area.

The economy of these neolithic people was primarily based upon hunting and food producing techniques. In this adventure they were self-sufficient. To a great extent they utilised natural resources with utmost efficiency and with the adaptation of more effective methods. This is exemplified by the presence of different varieties of tools in stone and bone found in the excavations. These are really fascinating and make an interesting study.

The main categories of stone tools comprise axes, adzes, chisels, gravers with curved and oblique working edges, double edged and perforated picks, flake knives, harvestors with perforations, sling balls, hammers, pestles and pounders, querns, rubbers, mace heads, double edged long and short points, beaked and shouldered ended points, awls, needles etc.

The manufacture of all these varieties of tools makes a very interesting study. At the initial stage a nodule was detached from the parent rock. It was flaked with a roundish hammer of the same material and given the requisite shape. The irregular scars that are produced were then pecked down with the same hammer and a uniform surface of the tool obtained. The edge of the tool was sharpened by striking it against a hard rock. Lustre on the tool was produced due to friction. The ends show a pitted surface due to constant hammering. Stone points have been produced by the technique of grooving and grinding. Parallel grooves were cut in a slate piece and the individual points were detached between the grooves and then grounded, Mace heads were usually made of ground stones with a central perforation for the shaft. Shaft hole was made either by drilling from both sides with a bow drill, or by abrasive methods or probably by some kind of a cylindrical drill. The axe, however, was set with its cutting edge parallel to the shaft. The axe was to be

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fitted into a straight wooden shaft while the adze or the other carpenter's tools like chisel had to be bound with elbowed handle. Microwear studies have revealed that the ground axe has often been used not only as axes but also as adzes and chisels.[67]

In a similar way the manufacture of bone tools reflects the capacity and the technical know-how of the people in sustaining their economy in a balanced manner. There were numerous types of bone implements which are not only unique of their kind but fascinating also. These include harpoons (Narus in Kashmiri), long and curved awls, needles, small and bigger sized, both with eyes and without eyes, harvestors, arrow heads, long and short points, spears, borers, daggers, scrappers, grain pullers, pins, horn picks, long and short sizes, double edged points, pen shaped points, personal ornaments like beads, pendants and combs, besides other composite tools.

The manufacture of these tools also involved several processes and each tool must have taken considerable time to complete. Generally the tools were produced out of long bones of animals like stags, sheep, goats etc by adopting the techniques of splitting, chipping and grinding. In case of a needle, high degree of uniform polishing right from tip to eye was produced by constant friction. Holes were provided by the technique of alternate pecking and drilling. Invariably the tips of the tools were always toothed and pitted. The shine was confined to the tips which diminished towards the shaft. The needles, awls and double edged points carried lustre all over. Cutting down of different sets of prongs of a harpoon was a more tough and brittle task.

Even with all this available stock of tools, the Neolithic man depended mostly for hunting on his more effective weapon, i.e. bow and arrow. The other sets of tools were used for a wide variety of purposes. Adzes, axes, chisels for digging, cutting down trees, chiselling them for a meaningful use; harpoons for fishing; scrappers for skinning and cleaning of the animals; mace heads for the transport of the wounded animals or as a fighting weapon, or for tilling the land; needles, awls or double edged points for sewing the skins or garments; arrow heads and spears for killing the game; beads, pendants or any other such object to beautify themselves; pestles and querns for crushing or pounding of grains or meat and so on. Traditional use of some of these tools though now in a different material is still in use. Exact prototypes of double-edged points in wood are still being used for manufacture of Kani shawls in the valley. With two wooden bars laid out on the ground, these weaving sticks along with whorls made of clay or stone could have been used for purposes of weaving without a loom during those prehistoric days. They would also cover the body with the skins. At first the raw material was spread out on the ground, dried, carefully cleaned with scrappers and then rubbed with fat and red

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ochre. Holes were made round the edges with a bodkin or an awl and the skins were drawn together by sinews. As a temporary measure the people were putting fat on their body as a protection against the wind and rain. The cold climate of the land, however, warranted warm clothes on the pattern which is demonstrated on the tiles of the Harwan, district Srinagar (c. 2nd-3rd century A.D.). So also harpoons, multi-pronged or long spears duly hafted of Neolithic period are still being used, though in iron, by the fishermen of the valley. This tradition is still alive even on the shores of seas and lakes of Central Asia on Caspian and Aral seas or Issyke-kul and Zayson lakes. It is an ingenious weapon and illustrates the gradual diffusion of the hunter over the whole world. It spread through Russia to Siberia in 3000 B.C. and from there to China, Japan[68] and quite likely here also.

The incidence of tools in stone or in bone is more in period II than that of period I. The presence of hoes, harvesters, picks, ring stones indicate beyond doubt that the people had the rudimentary knowledge of agriculture like digging, planting, sowing and thrashing of the crops. This is also substantiated by the investigation of the botanical remains from the site. 24 soil samples from different strata of period I and II were examined and the plant remains so recovered belonged to the ancient crops of wheat, barley and lentil. Cultivation of *T. sphaerococcum* type of wheat was widespread in North West in ancient India and Burzahom was one such site. The cultivation of barley spread to the fertile crescent and its north eastern limit was Central Asia. The origin of lentil lies in Mediterranean and South Eastern Asia. It was widely distributed in Turkey, Syria, Israel, northern Iraq and western and northern Iran. Its presence in Kashmir is, therefore, significant as it indicates contact with these areas.[69] Also the presence of querns and pestles in the pit chambers which apart from crushing the meat might have also been used for ponding of the wild varieties of cereals. This implies that the inhabitants were supplementing their food by resorting to agriculture. Still hunting was of a paramount importance which is demonstrated by a very important document engraved on a stone slab.

Much has been written on the engraved scene on the stone slab which only formed a part of rectangular slab structure ascribable to period II. The slab has a maximum width of 70 cms and the engraved portion covers a space of 48 × 27 cms. The entire scene is distributed into two registers. The top register shows a male dog—the main companion of the man in his hunting. It has been portrayed in an exciting mood. On the top left are two suns one being complete and carries sixteen radiating lines. The uppermost part of the other is slightly lost or damaged. The depiction of two suns reflects the rising and the setting sun as on the movement of the sun only depended the success and safety of the hunter while wandering in search of the prey in the highly thick forests. The scene in the next register has a very important bearing on the economy of the people. Here the engraving depicts a

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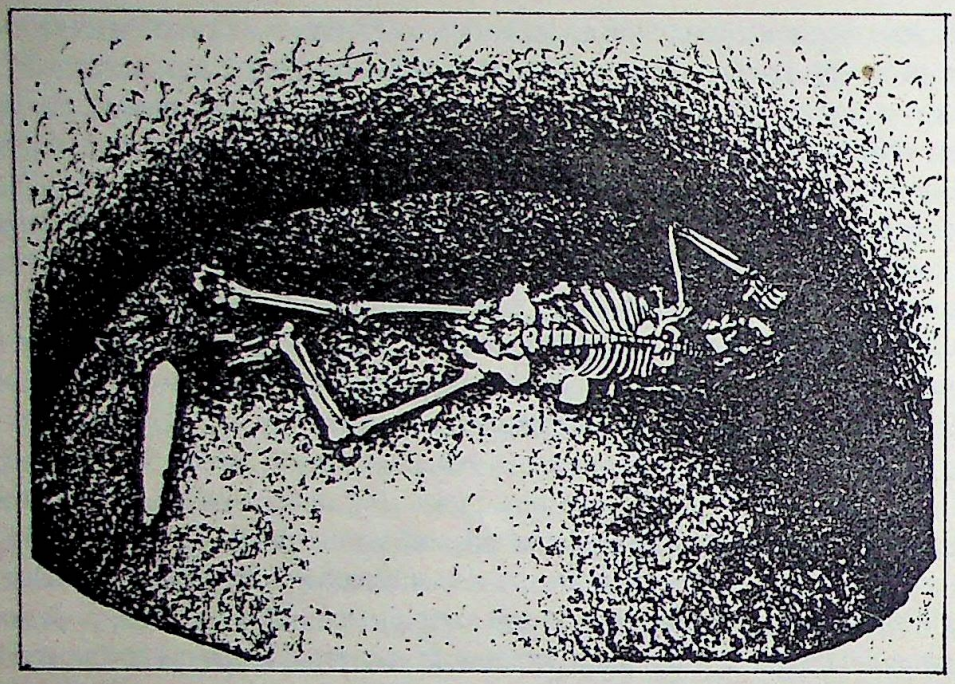

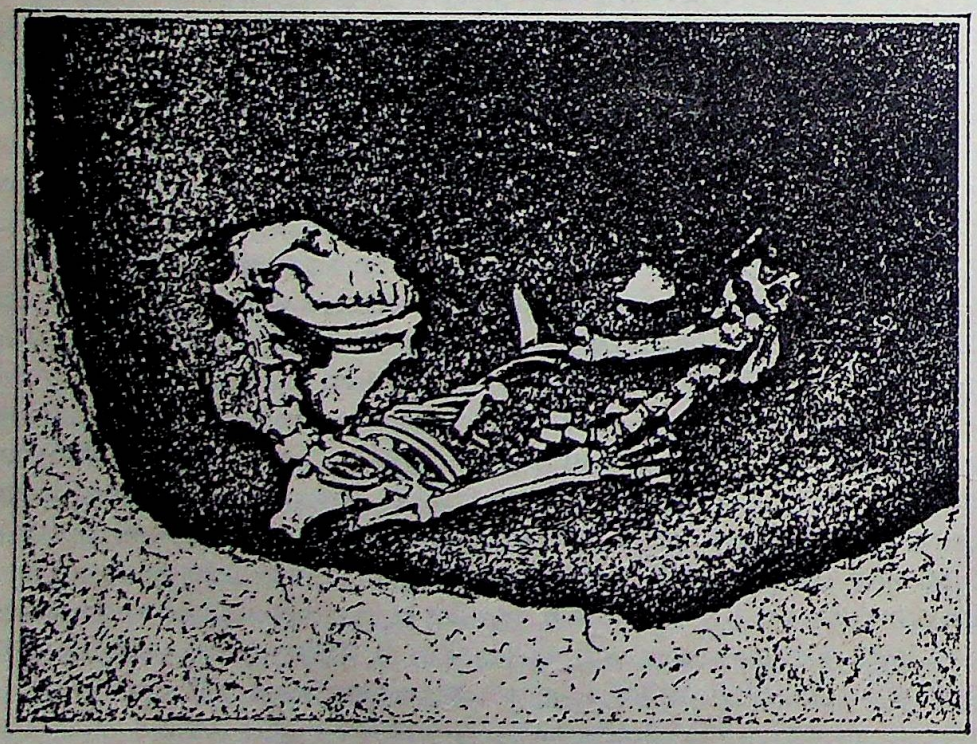

Fig. 13. (a) Human skeleton in a grave with a pointed stone slab from Burzahom (period II).
(b) Animal skeleton of a domesticated dog (period II).

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male Barasingha (Kashmiri Hangul) being pierced from behind with a long spear by a hunter (14 cms high) and an another male hunter (12 cms high) has attacked it with his bow and arrow—one arrow having already struck the animal. The people of the Neolithic Phase II had no reverence for the slab which is said to bear magico-religious beliefs of the Neolithic men of the valley.[70] This assessment has several limitations. While excavating the slab from the rest of the slabs, the engraved side faced downwards[71] of the entire structure which on the basis of sandy deposit found inside was claimed to have been utilised for storage of water. Naturally the engraved scene was attempted at by the ancestors of the people (period II). The people of this period utilised it with other ordinary slabs. It was as such non-functional in the position in which it was found.[72] So it had no religious importance for the members of period II. Their predecessors had no conception of life after death, or strictly speaking any sort of notion for a religion. The subjects depicted suggest direct link with the hunting people. There are no evidences like paintings on a rock, pottery or modelling in clay or of terracotta figurines at Burzahom, even in limited numbers which we find in other Neolithic or Chalcolithic settlements elsewhere.[73] All these evidences we lack at Burzahom both in periods I and II though in the later stage of period II a conception of religion appears to have arisen among the people but without any widespread influence. The first and perhaps the unique type of the engraving found in the valley mainly depicts the life style of the people described in the tradition like those of Pisachas. Their uncivilised way of life is demonstrated in the engraving itself when all the figures (human and animals) are shown with enlarged genitals. This is the indication of a typical type of prehistoric art. It is only to avoid physical intercourse during the course of hunting. There are instances where sexual intercourse between man and even beasts has been depicted so as to keep the animals in subjugation (Rock engravings in northern Italy's Camonica Valley c. 3000 years ago). Another engraving on a slab described as tectiform representation[74] makes no meaningful reading in view of the limitations of the material at our disposal.

In view of the imprecise evidence afforded by these solitary specimens especially the recognizable one of the hunting scene, it is rather too early to bracket the event with the paintings or the engravings of Pre-neolithic or Neolithic art in general where such multi-dimensional attempts indicate a sympathetic magic to help the prehistoric people for the supply of their food.[75] The magic in turn gave birth to religion and is said that it is the child of the former,[76] though it is argued that it was religion which gave birth to magic.[77] Whatever the reality behind these arguments, it is quite understandable that both magico-religious practices are not too incompatible with the rest of the cultures.[78] The sequential behaviour of the Burzahom find, the spot of location and also the date of the engraving now deter-

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mined to period I give quite a negative assessment of the first batch of Neolithic settlers at the site so far as the religious beliefs are concerned. There was total absence of grave pits in period I.[79] It is the cult of the dead which initiated the prehistoric man to magico-religious devices.[80] No definite burial practice was resorted to by the Neolithic people of period I in Kashmir. The system of burying the dead provides some indication of the religious beliefs of the Neolithic people. Even the burying practices of Period II here do not carry similar parallels when compared to other prehistoric sites or the contemporary Harappan culture outside the valley. Still it is only the contacts with the Harappans in period II that the Burzahomese were concerned for the dead and started deliberate burials within their habitational area.

In all ten human skeletons and eleven animal burials were encountered at the site from circular or oval pits of period II. Barring one, all the human burial pits were internally plastered with 'chunam' as against the animal burials. Human burials were both of primary and secondary types. The former contained extended articulated skeletons and the latter only selected bones. Four of the skeletons were found in a crouched position. An interesting burial was of a middle-aged man of 45-50 years. He was placed in a pit whose sides tapered towards the bottom and belonged to the closing stage of period II. The body was in a reclining position and resting on its back and its head lifted towards the right shoulder. The right leg was slightly bent and the left one was fully stretched. Near the right foot, the pit line is demarcated by placing some big stones on the outer periphery of which a burial of a child aged 5 years was also found. The milk teeth of the child were quite distinct. The child it appears, died before the man who it appears was shocked and did not tolerate the child's death and appears to have breathed his last just in a reclining posture. In his grave, small red ware pots, perhaps the play toys of the child were the only grave goods found. This exemplifies the imagination of the Neolithic man over the death of the child and hints at the religio-emotional aspect of man. Another instance is of a burial, probably of a woman. Five numbers of carnelian beads were found just below the neck part of the skeleton. The carnelian beads were not locally manufactured and hence it also substantiates the view that the conception of burying the dead had its source from outside the valley. A curious feature was observed in case of the secondary burials. In their case, the skeletons were made bare of flesh and after desiccation, the legs and arms were folded at the joints and along with the skull and the body deposited in a pit. One such burial was excavated of an adult woman aged 31-35 years. The skull was placed in north-west direction. The bones were sprinkled with red ochre. Another evidence of an unusual interest was that the skull carried evidence of trepanning showing seven finished and four unfinished circular holes[81] in the norma lateralis position on the parietal bone between bregma

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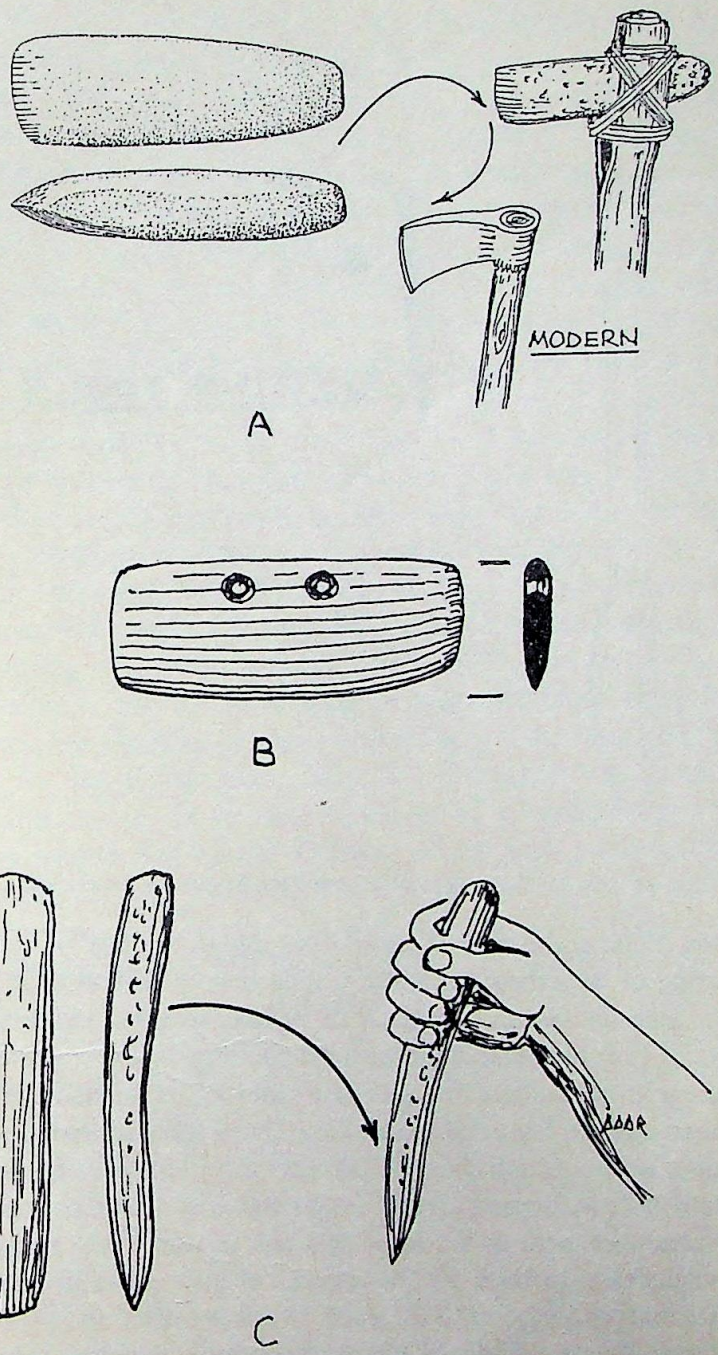

Fig. 14. (a) A stone celt; working style after hafting and its modern survival.
(b) An agricultural tool-harvester.
(c) Digging tool-hoe and its use after hafting.

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Fig. 15. Knitting tools in bone from Burzahom excavations.

and lambda. None of the holes disclosed any sign of healing.[82]

Smearing of defleshed bones has a long history behind it. It is a world wide custom to daub the bodies especially of women with red ochre so as to enhance their fertility. In Palaeolithic times also the paintings or the engravings on the rocks were painted in red colour. The pits of a child burial at Malta in Siberia[83] and at Choukoutien cave in China of palaeolithic times were sprinkled and painted with red colour or ochre. At a distance of 200 kms from Moscow, the skull and the body of an elderly man in the cemetery of Sungir was coated with red ochre.[84] The cult of the dead continued with all the more zeal and fervour in the neolithic times when besides their desire to hope for the success of their game in hunting they would devote much more attention to the earth which provided food for the community. They believed that the spirits of the dead ancestors who lay under the earth were supposed to assist in the growth of crops. They felt that the red ochre or the vermilion would enable the dead to be born again. This also gave birth to the conception

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of Mother Goddess. Her statuettes in stone, clay or bone have been found in France, Spain and in Russia in both pre-Neolithic and Neolithic settlements. In Iran it had a long development. Stylised figures of the Mother Goddess are found from Tepe Khakhiya, Tepe Sarab and Turang Tepe in Iran datable to 3rd millennium B.C. Again at Hissar near Damghan, this figure occurs in albaster and bone and is one of the earlier Iranian forms.[85] In Baluchistan—a region of transition from the West to Central Asia and China on the one hand and to India on the other, such interesting female figurines claimed to be household deities of Mother Goddess were found at Kulli and Zhob valleys.[86] In the same sequence human and animal figurines have come from pre-Harappan and Harappan settlements in the sub-continent also.[87] These were painted with a red wash. Red was regarded as a fertility symbol. Fertility in animals meant to the primitive man more food and in humans more people. In Europe also these cult figures of Mother Goddesses were stuck into the ground to preside over household shrines. These were regarded as fertility cults of the people and expressed their desire for more progeny not only for men but for the game animals on which they depended for food.[88] The tradition continued in subsequent periods also. The people regarded that the Mother Earth—a form of Mother Goddess menstruates in order to prepare herself for fertility and for more crops. Hence the red ochre or the vermilion stood for menstrual blood being the fertility symbol.[89] To paint the bones of the dead with red meant the conception of re-birth and prosperity for the living souls. Only this procedure was adopted by the Burzahomese who were quite ignorant of the art of manufacturing any form of female figurines representing Mother Goddess or any such particular form. Such evidences are totally missing at the site. This also points towards the less appealing magico-religious urges of the people. However, red ochre or vermilion continued to be the mark of fertility symbol. Married women still besmear their heads with it. In Kashmir it had a special religious significance right from birth to death. Upholding the menstrual tradition of the vermilion, the Mother Goddess is worshipped with the prayer 'Those women tormented by the fires of Cupid with eyes like those of frightened young deer are easily drawn towards the fascination of those who meditate even for a moment on the lustre (of crimson hue) of Goddess covering the sky with clouds of vermilion dust and submerging the earth in folds of molten lac' (I.9). In an another reference, the devotee exclaims, 'Oh Goddess! He who perceives (during meditation) even for a moment, the sky coloured with a coat of vermilion dust and the earth soaked into red juice of lac with the glory, beautiful-eyed maidens, casting away their modesty, run after him.'[90] (II. 13.) The use of vermilion which continued right from the primitive age still persists on all auspicious religio-functions. The head of the dead prior to cremation is also smeared with it.

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Trepanning was a drastic cure for insanity or even headache among some primitive people. The usual purpose was to relieve skull fractures or tumours, as today. Healing of the holes showed that the patient recovered but it could not be a complete cure.[91] If and when the primitive man ailed, an incision was made in the body, to let the pain escape.[92] Instances of trepanning the animals have also come forth. The head of a wolf in Nice littoral on the slopes of Mont Boron in France had been trepanned.[93] No such event in case of animals has come from Burzahom, though at times the animal bones were also treated with red ochre along with the human bones.

No animal burials were found in Period I. Only in Period II, again there is a solid proof that animals were sacrificed to honour the dead person.[94] The sacrifice was a part of the ritual being the beginning of the early religion of the Neolithic men of the valley. The pet animals like dogs, antlers and goats were found interred with the human body. In an another grave pit, five skulls of wild dogs, fragmentary bones represented by ribs, limb bones and pelvic girdles and horns of antler were found buried. The disarticulated bones of Himalayan ibex were found in an another burial pit and below it at a depth of 0.30 m fragmentary bones of antler, dog, sheep and goat were encountered. Sometimes the burial of pet animals like dog and wolves were deposited either single or in two. In this case the skeleton of a dog was found to be lying in supine position resting on its back with legs upwards. The single burials belonged to the dog and the wolf and the double burials belonged to dogs at different levels in the same pit. The distinctive feature of the animal burials is that these too were generally buried in the regularly dug out grave pits within the habitational areas as was done in the case of human burials.[95] Burial of pet animals and in some cases with those of masters is unique of its kind. It is foreign to Indian tradition.[96] However bones of dogs have been obtained from Harappan sites in India and outside. Animal remains of sheep, goat and cattle have been found in almost all the excavated sites of Baluchistan from pre-Harappan or Harappan sites.[97] So also the animal remains have been found at Sialk and Shah Tepe in Iran.[98] From the evidences available it is now known that the dog was the main companion of the neolithic man right from the day he settled in the valley. He depicted the animal in his engraving (hunting scene, Period I) in the style in which he needed him most. The dog guarded his herd and helped him in the art of chase on which his well-being depended. His love for the dog is exemplified from the Burzahom remains where a dog is found buried with him in the burial belonging to Period II. With the domestication of dog, it may have occurred to the primitive men to do the same with other animals and thus save themselves from the trouble of hunting.[99]

In addition to meat, the wild animals provided potential source for raw materials for making tools and weapons.[100] Besides bone, antler, horn, ivory, hides, fur

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skins, gut, sinew, they also supplied fat. Fat was not only an essential energy food in a cold region like Kashmir but also fuel for lighting and heating. It also served as a waterproof agent.[101]

The pottery at Burzahom also poses an interesting problem. The fact that the pit chambers or the undisturbed dwelling pits did not yield any pottery reflects that the early neolithic people at Burzahom were not conversant with the art of manufacturing pottery and instead baskets or leather bags were their non-ceramic containers. Nearly 1 m of cultural deposit resting on the loess is devoid of ceramic industry, even if the people were fully acquainted with the technical know-how of making various categories of lithic or bone tools. Without much time lag, these Neolithic men of the valley also found out the way to make pottery. It was no easy task for the potter. He had to clean the clay, free it from unwanted material like stones, dry it up in sun and mix it with water until it was plastic. He would then improve its quality by adding tempers such as sand, ash or cattle dung. Again sprinkling it with water at intervals he would meticulously knead it with both hands. He must have obtained the conception of hardening the pots in a kiln through the clay hearth which became hardened due to fire lit in them mostly for roasting of the animal flesh. He had not acquired much knowledge of mixing the ingredients with the clay in proper ratios or the firing of the pots by maintaining reasonable temperatures at the initial stages. This resulted in crude specimens of pottery in the beginning. Subsequently having come into contact with the Harappans in Period II, they mixed half and half ratio of fine sand and also acquired considerable knowledge of firing. The result was that he could make in due course of time better stuff of pots, of course without the aid of potter's wheel to start with. In their manufacture two main techniques of 'Coiling' and 'Strip' methods were resorted to. In case of 'Coiling,' the pots were built in various stages by adding different coils of clay one over the above each being pressed and smeared till these were properly joined. More and more coils of clay are added till pot is given the proper shape. In case of 'Strip' method, the pots were developed to certain height by hallowing lump of clay placed on a mat and pressed at the bottom and the sides. In the initial stage these might have resembled the bowls of an early historical period with razor edged rim tapering to a flat base. The shape thus acquired was added with alternate loaves of clay on the exterior and interior sides of the pot one over the above till the required shape was obtained. It seems that a different technique was used to make the surface of the pot uniform. A piece of wood, pot sherd or a bone piece might have been used against the external wall of the pot with the simultaneous rotation of the mat. This movement later on gave birth to the potter's wheel. In the process such pots carried with them mat impressions at their bottoms, and also maintained uniformity in their surfaces. After allowing the pots to get hardened in the sun, a

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bonfire of bush-wood might have been kept around them to burn them out till the technique of putting them in a 'kiln' was introduced. When the pots were cool, these were ready for use.

Neolithic pottery at Burzahom indicates a prolific output. Individual features over the wares and overlapping of the pottery types found from one stratum to another suggest a continuous occupation of the site. The broad changes in shape technique, fabric and decorative motifs represented by incised dots, zigzags, nail impressions and in very rare cases bird designs, indicate the change in cultural pattern as well. In Period II with the emergence of burnished ware, an advanced technique is reflected both in polishing and manufacture of the pots. In fact, it is the deluxe ware of the site and demonstrates a complete variation from other fabrics and types of the pottery.

The main fabrics recognized are as under:

Thick Coarse Greyware

In its manufacture 'Strip' method has been employed. Surface of the pots invariably shows deep and irregular marks of 'brushing'. The matrix is fine but porous. Individual sherds show irregular fractures, uniform shades of grey colour with coarse sand fillers. The shapes are mainly represented by handi, lota and small vase types.

Fine Greyware

It has generally ash-like grey colour and has medium to thin fabric. In the manufacture of the pots of this fabric mostly 'coil' technique has been employed. Large sized angular grains of milky quartz have been commonly used as fillers. The matrix is fine but less porous. The recurrent types are lota type of vessels with out-turned collared rim and incised nail decorations. Surfaces of the pots invariably show deeply incised brushing and scraping impressions.

Burnished Ware

It is of fine medium fabric and the shades are of grey to black and occasionally red. In this fabric both 'Strip' and 'Coil' techniques appear to have been employed. It is characterised by a well levigated clay free from impurities. Due to repeated burnishing, the external surfaces of the pots show smooth and lustrous look. Beautiful instances of external decorations were noticed. The significant example was the ornamentation of a peacock on one of the dish type pots. The common occurrences were long necked jars, vases, surahis, basins, bowls, lids, and dish-on-stand. Triangular shaped but hollow incised decorations were the main characteristic features of the dish-on-stand (Kashmiri Bushakab). Obliquely incised lines presenting a pattern of broken cheverons were also observed on some of the pots.

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A very interesting and significant find was of a fine, globular, wheel made red ware pot of this period. It carried the painting in black of a wild goat with long curved horns and hanging ears. The space within these is covered by rosetters. It is exactly as was found at Kot Diji, West Pakistan or at Hissar in Iran. 'If one compares this motif at Burzahom (where it can be dated to c. 1700 B.C.) with Hissar and Kot Diji figures, it would appear that it has a greater resemblance to the one from Iran than to the other from Sind'.[102] This, is, however, the substantive proof of the affinity of this culture with the then existing Harappan culture. Another pot, of a smaller size, was encountered in the upper levels of this period. Surprisingly enough, the pot was sealed by a thick and hard layer of mud deposit which when removed, revealed a hoard of 950 beads (agate and carnelian) within it, which too are not related to the site. It appears that the owner of the pot carrying bulk of semi-precious stones could not tempt them to these and he escaped leaving the pot with the finds there. This apparently hints at the non-cordial treatment meted out to the newcomers in the valley which has some bearing to the literary version of the long drawn strife between Pisachas and Nagas.[103] In the end the latter predominated. Next to these, a few copper barbed arrow-heads with the mid-rib, ring, bangle and a pin from this period clearly indicate an intrusion from the contemporary culture or cultures across the border with Harappan and pre-Harappan people.[104] The anthropological study of human skeletal remains from Burzahom has revealed that the cramia which are basically long headed resemble more closely with Harappan cemetery R 37.[105] In spite of cultural differences, therefore, there appears ethnic affinity between the Harappans and Burzahomese.[106] The Burzahom skeletons show visible similarity with the excavated remains in the west. On these considerations it was pointed out that the Neolithic people of Kashmir belonged to West Asian stock.[107] The cultural data or the material equipment represent a well organised movement which existed and flourished here till the end of 1000 B.C. It could not have developed in isolation or without the external stimulation, intrusion and frequent contacts with the people of the neighbouring regions. There are significant similarities with the Neolithic cultural material of the other regions whether they belonged to Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan or China.[108] The prehistoric man of the valley had a strong indigenous talent right from the start which was further nurtured and augmented with the arrival of fresh arrivals from time to time. The old conception about the original settlers of the land stands now modified. The richness of archaeological data as recognised here induced the experts to see parallels from any of the newly surveyed sites in the valley. The extensive mound at Gufkral was selected for the purpose.

Gufkral (lat. 35° 54′ N long. 75° 60′ E) which literally means potter's (*Kral*) cave (*Gof*), is situated 41 kms to the south-east of Srinagar, tehsil Tral in Pulwama

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district. The site which has a height of about 35 m from the road on the west lies between the two streamlets which join river Jhelum some 10 kms from here. Next to Burzahom, the site is capped by the largest group of megalithic stones, sixteen in number. Almost all of them have fallen and as such none of them is in its original position. These are confined to the eastern side of the mound overlooking Walatara Nallah,[109] which is almost its centre also.[110] Concentration of these Menhir type of megaliths at one place or in close proximity to each other reflects a remarkably distinct and unique situation as compared to similar other cultural traits found in the country or elsewhere. The details revealed here are also similar to Burzahom.[111] Against two phases of Burzahom neolithic, sequence of three phases has been reported from Gufkral.[112] The earliest phase is aceramic supposed to have been discovered for the first time in a stratigraphic context in India when such aceramic phases have already been confirmed both at the excavated sites and during the exploration of the valley (see S.S. Saar's *Ancestors of Kashmir*, New Delhi, 1992, p. 50).[113] The structural data of the Aceramic period is marked by shallow, deep oval or circular and rectangular dwelling pits. As at Burzahom, the oval or circular dwelling pits here also are narrow at the top and wider at the base. Dwellings in the open were also noticed. The floors of the dwellings were decorated and plastered with red-ochre paste so as to ward off white ants. Samples of mud plaster with reed impressions were also recovered from this level. Both stone and bone tools were recovered but the latter out-numbered the former. The stone tools were marked by adzes, slicers, pestles, pounders, points and more significant in this category being the harpoon. In bone, needle, harpoons, beads (barrel shaped) awls, piercers, scrappers and arrow heads were found. Some of the bone tools were completely polished while others have only their working tips polished. The grains identified were wheat, barley and lentil as already recognized at Burzahom. The top layer of this period according to C^{14} dates goes back to 2470 B.C. against 2375 ± 120 B.C. of Burzahom.

The Aceramic period was followed by Ceramic Neolithic period categorised as Early Neolithic and Mature Neolithic. In Early neolithic period, hand-made grey and dull red ware made their appearance. The main shapes were big jars, bowls and basins. Besides, a stem piece of dish-on-stand in coarse dull ware was also found. The decorations on the pots were marked by pinched designs on the neck region and reed and straw impressions both on the exterior and interior of the pots. On structural side, the building activity was the construction of mud and rubble walls. Thick floors of compact clay mixed with 'chunam' were encountered. Deep dwelling pits and open-air dwellings used in fair weather were also located. The artefacts of the earlier period continued. In this period ring stones made their appearance. Two beads of semi-precious stones were found out of which one was carnelian.

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There was increase in the percentage of domesticated animals. The grains of the preceding period continued.

The mature phase of neolithic period was characterised by the presence of burnished and dull red ware in addition to Grey ware. All the shapes of the previous period continued. The addition was of long necked jars. Common features of the neolithic strata represented by dish-on-stand with triangular perforated designs also came from this period. The decorations included mat impressed bases, incised oblique designs on the neck parts of the pots. There was a spurt in the structural activity represented by circular dwelling pits, storage pits, circular mud walls, and also common stone walls. These structures were surrounded by series of post holes. Post holes were found around the dwelling and storage pits and it is presumed by the excavator that these were covered with thatched roofs made of reed and branches of willow trees. Stone tools included unfinished celts, points, querns, pounders, harvesters and an engraver. The significant discovery was of a spindle whorl both in stone and in pottery. This is indicative of the knowledge of weaving and spinning of woollen clothes. The presence of bodkins or needles or grooved poker type of bone tools also helped the people in stiching these clothes which was a necessity in a cold region like Kashmir. This level also yielded a large number of polished bone tools. Harappan contacts in this period have been established with the discovery of a copper pin with flattened coiled head besides the recovery of few carnelian beads. Wheel turned black burnished ware was also reported from the closing phase of this period, when also the grains of rice (datable to about 1000 B.C.)[114] have also been reported. The cereals of the previous period also continued as usual. Domestication of the animals also was in full swing. The addition was that of a pig.

The excavator of the site has confirmed that the cultural material of the site suggests that the Neolithic people of Kashmir led a settled life.[115]

In addition to Gufkral, trial digs were taken at two more newly surveyed sites. One is at Shepandur on Pampur-Sombur link road. Here in mid-levels, series of floor levels with intermittent burnt layers were noticed. The layer sealing these deposits yielded a gritty red ware pot with outflayed rim (on display in C.A. Museum). The stratum corresponds to the closing phases of Neolithic levels encountered at Burzahom or at Gufkral. The site on the whole is marked by the abundance of gritty red ware as compared to grey or burnished ware. Against this, the small scale dig at another site of Kulladur near Pattan on Srinagar-Baramulla highway, provided mainly grey and burnished wares. Gritty red is conspicuously absent. The lowest deposit sealing the natural is marked by compact black coloured soil which is devoid of any pottery. It is followed by ceramic levels of 2 mts thickness marked by loose muddy, charcoal layers with intervening thin floor

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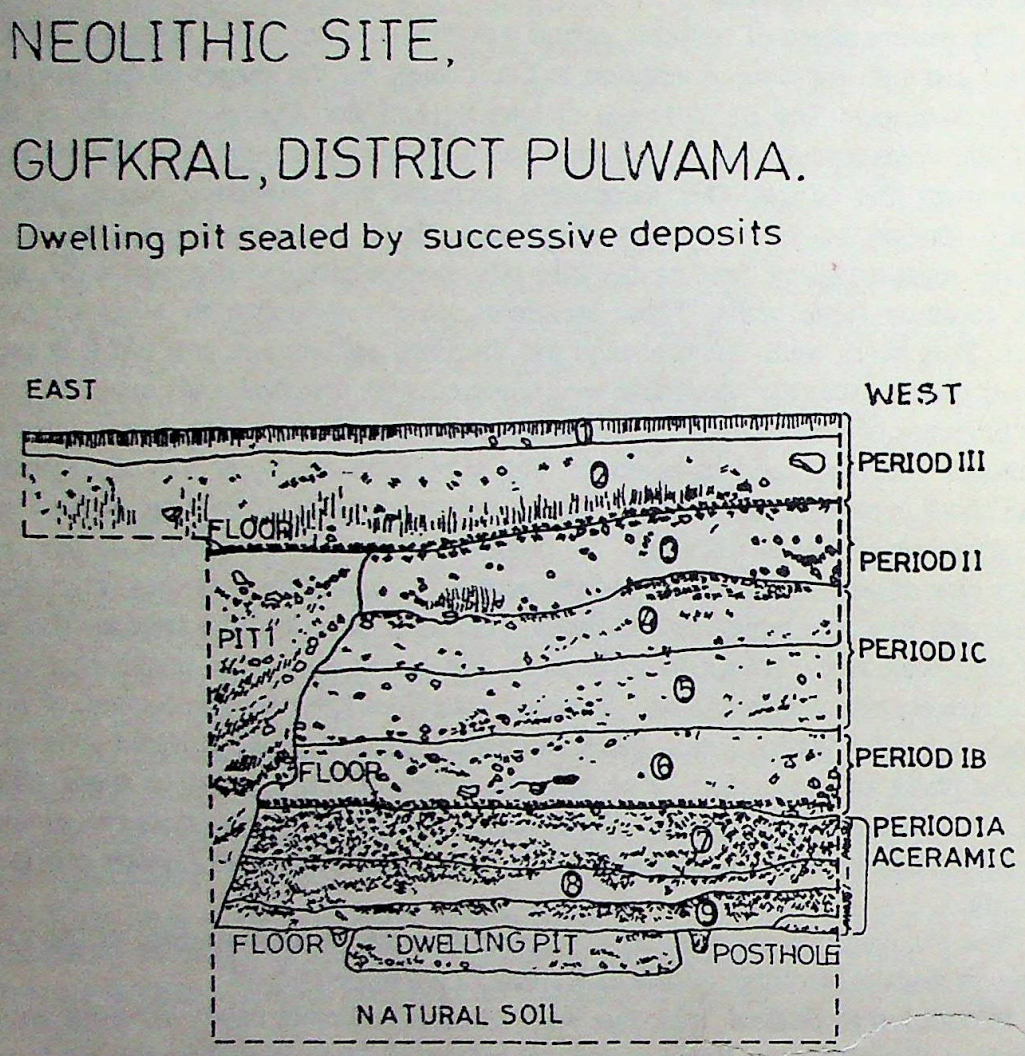

Fig. 16. Dwelling pit sealed by successive deposits from Gufkral, district Pulwama.

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levels. The stone implements were few and lacked any sort of polish. The burnished ware encountered was mostly represented by dish-on-stand type with circular or horizontal designs on the neck parts and triangular perforated decorations on the stems. Grey ware is marked by small globular pots. No bone tools were found either on the surface or in the dig at these sites. The work at these sites was taken up by the experts of Kashmir Palaeo-Climatic Project.

The distinctive Neolithic culture of Kashmir is quite at variance with other known Neolithic cultures of India.[116] Contrary to pre-neolithic people, who were mere hunter gatherers of wild berries and roots, the Neolithic men led a settled life. On the whole the period is marked by an extraordinary uniformity of culture but the archaeological records reveal that only few sites contain greater depth of occupation and richness in tool assemblages. In recent years at the village of Tarakpur on the shores of Wular lake (Sopre-Bandipore link road), district Baramulla, two abnormally long pick type of stone axes were found. One measured 49 cm in length and the other 39 cm. Both were polished, ground and pecked. They could go deeper into the ground even without the aid of hafting. But these unique finds had no other material associated with them. Again at a lower terrace, near the village of Warapora, two number menhirs were found. One of these carried a broad and wide type of cup-mask. No pottery was found near these at the site. (*Kashmir Times* dated 1.4.1985, p. 1). The presence of the menhirs in this part of the valley is significant and warranted a detailed survey. The proliferation of archaeological sites coincides with the climatic amelioration indicated by large population densities. There has been external stimulation, intrusion and frequent contacts with the people of the neighbouring countries which actually shaped the course of cultural development in the valley.[117] The location of the region was favourable for external contacts. The numerous lakes rich in acquatic fauna and fast moving and medium sized animals like deer, wolf, sheep, goat etc provided favourable spots and material for making sophisticated bone tools. The hand-made pottery, burnished wares, stone and bone tools from the excavated neolithic sites, Burzahom in particular, show close contacts with the Swat valley.[118] The people together with the newly arrived people acquired sufficient knowledge and experience in the domestication of fauna and flora, adaptation of structural system and manufacture of pottery and new types of tools. In short, the arrival of the people from outside during this period left their indelible imprints on the people of this place which in the process had led to cultural amalgamation. Now the data regarding the original settlers of the land, intermittent waves of immigrants from the desert lands of the north or adjacent regions stand fully substantiated.

There were thus manifold cultural contacts as is now confirmed by the results of the excavations of major sites and also from the probing of the minor sites.

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The early man needed a reliable and ensured source of food which he obtained only through the control of breeding of animals and plants.[119] The origin of ancient agriculture marked by wild variety of wheat and barley started from the Mediterranean and through Asia Minor to Iran, and then to Turkmenia, Caspian shore, Baluchistan, Punjab and Afghanistan. This cultural wave, out of Caspian shore, through other Central Asian regions entered China by crossing over desert oasis and not the river valleys. Still China turned to be world's greatest centre of plant domestication as the loess soil of China is very fertile.[120] Iran formed the primary zone of the entire belt. It is from here that the migratory trends extended towards north, east and west. Obviously Kashmir did not remain immune to this cultural wave. Crude and hand-made plain pottery with rich lithic industry and numerous bone tools have been found at Bakun, Sialk and Hissar in Iran and Anau in Turkmenia. A distinctive culture encountered at Anau is an intrusion from Iran itself.[121] As in the valley of Kashmir, these neolithic sites in Iran revealed absence of any clay figurines and that the dead were buried within the houses instead of in separate cemeteries.[122]

Neolithic artefacts with typological similarity to the tools of the Hissar culture also occur in northern Tadjikistan, southern Ferghana valley, on the shores of Issik-kul lake and Thy valley even though local differences exit.[123] The most complete neolithic sequence in Central Asia has been defined as the Djeitun culture with its distribution in south Turkmenia, the Keltminar culture with its distribution near the Aral sea and the Gissar culture with its distribution in different parts of Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan.[124] Neolithic cultures developed further through external contacts.[125] The evolution of these cultures is now attributed to the increased interaction including the possible movement of the people with the Iranian plateau. Southern Turkmenistan has brought about a neolithic revolution in Central Asia, the source of which is pointed out to Iran.[126] South Tadjikistan is said to represent the Neolithic strata of Burzahom.[127] The intermediate link and the nearest parallels are from Mehrgarh in Baluchistan[128] and Aq Kupruk or Darra-i-Kur in Afghanistan. The earlier Neolithic culture is represented by non-ceramic levels. The lithic and bone assemblage of the non-ceramic neolithic and ceramic neolithic varied very little from each other at Aq Kupruk which is the case in Kashmir neolithic as well. Ceramics of Darra-i-Kur in Afghanistan also tie in nicely with the two neolithic phases of Burzahom. The intentional burials of goat (in association with the fragmentary skeletons of one or two children) relate to eastern Central Asia, south Siberia and the valley of Kashmir ascribable to neolithic period.[129] Mundigak culture in Afghanistan is the counterpart of prehistoric Anau and it is established that the settlers of this culture had links with southern Turkmenia between 3000 and 2750 B.C.[130] (approximately being the age of neolithic culture of Kashmir also). In

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between these, further evidence of affinities in pottery, stone and bone tools and structural phases of Burzahom neolithic has come from Ghalighai,[131] Sarai Khola,[132] Loebanr[133] and Aligrama[134] in Swat valley of Pakistan. These are substantial and fascinating parallels from the neolithic sites of Pan Po-tsun of Yang Shao culture in north China or from Lung Shan cultures in north-east China. Structural representation of neolithic houses on the pattern of Kashmir neolithic traditions are found here. These are round, square and rectangular. Inside, the walls and floors are plastered with a thin layer of clay. Almost all the types of bone and stone tools are found here. Perforated semi-lunar knives as found at Burzahom and Gufkral in Kashmir are the main prototypes of stone tool assemblages. This material equipment of the neolithic people of China advanced to the highlands of Manchuria, south of the Gobi and traversed Sinkiang by way of Tarim Basin. Easily accessible to influences from the west, the human settlement of neolithic period turned to be the cradle of Chinese civilization. The ancient route linking West Asia, Central Asia and China in the east was later followed by the famous Silk Road which converged at Kashgar—the biggest oasis in the Tarim basin. Both the northern and southern roads from China divided to reunite at Kashgar again. The southern route from here led across the Kun-Lun and Karakorum mountains to Gilgit and the valley of the Indus.[135] However, both the routes were further fostered in the subsequent periods by wide ranging missionary activities from China to India and vice versa in which Kashmir played a leading part. Regular contact on these routes in the prehistoric period had left a profound and lasting effect on the transmission of ideas, trade and cultural interchange between China, Kashmir and Central Asia, north of the Great Wall in the Gobi desert and the high lands of Manchuria. As a result of this, we find cultural similarities in early historic and historical periods as well in these regions.[136] A dog burial with his master found in Kashmir neolithic culture is reported in the Ang-Ang-Hsi culture of Manchuria.[137] The bone and stone tool complex is associated with such traits as found in the Shilka valley of eastern Siberia. Here dog was a prominent animal of the prehistoric man and his main occupation was fishing and hunting.[138] Sinkiang till recently known as eastern Turkistan was a known State between India and China—joining Kashmir and ancient Gandhara with China's westernmost province, Kansu.[139] In Kansu, Shensi and Honan, Lang Shaeo and Lung Shan neolithic elements especially the early farming techniques are found. Sinkiang area itself is a vast extension of the Gobi desert in the midst of which lies anciently better populated and more habitable area known as Taklamakan.[140] There were numerous routes from Sinkiang (ancient Turkistan) to Kashmir. The most notable route was the famous Karakoram pass—a desolate highway for entry into trans-Indus or Kashmir. Four Asian nations viz. China, Pakistan, Russia and India virtually meet one another at points 17,000 feet

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above the sea level in a terrain which Central Asians crossed in the ancient days to descent upon the warm lands of the Indus valley.[141] In recent field work in Sikkim, significant discoveries were made of neolithic stone tools like celts, adzes, harvesters some with single or double perforations.[142] The perforated stone harvesters have been found in North and Central China and are also present in Jomon neolithic phase in Japan and Korea. This demonstrates the cultural connection between Kashmir, China and further east.[143]

The evidences, therefore, reveal a wide range of cultural contacts in the neolithic period which lasted for a long time. The visits of Chinese pilgrims or Marco Polo were actually anticipated by the prehistoric men of Kashmir. The people since early times travelled both to and from India through Baluchistan which provided shelters for the earliest Neolithic people. Culturally the region of Baluchistan has remained an Iranian border region having close connection with the territories which lie to the north and west as with the east.[144] The Bolan pass[145] or the insignificant Baluch town—Las Bela[146] were the true gateway for entry into North West Frontier Province (ancient Gandhara region) which included the Peshawar valley, modern Swat and other regions on the west bank of the Indus.[147] There existed close cultural and political connections with Gandhara and Kashmir from very early times. Neolithic contacts between Iran and Kashmir are very well known from the primitive prototypes of cultivated cereals and later on by other archaeological finds represented by painted pottery, carnelian or agate or paste beads and copper arrow-heads. Though culturally different, the metal objects found at Burzahom or at Gufkral indicate an intrusion from some contemporary culture across the borders of the valley marked by a well developed Harappan culture.[148] The most significant discovery in the series was of copper hair-pins from Gufkral (1600-1700 B.C.), such dress pins especially double spiral headed copper pins have been found in eastern Mediterranean regions, Hissar-III (Iran), Anau (Turkistan), Mohenjodaro, Chanhu-daro, Jhukar (Pakistan)[149] and at Manda (Jammu).[150] The time range for these pins is put between 4th and 2nd millennium B.C. Its presence in the Neolithic context of the valley shows close contacts with the West Asia including Harappan culture. Not only this, the skeletal remains from Burzahom have also been identified as of Harappan series. An important evidence of squatting facets observed in the three Burzahom tibiae have been found in Kish (A city state of ancient Sumer near Babylon), Anau (Turkistan), Hissar (Iran) and possibly in Baluchistan. The measurements of Burzahom female skeletons are well within the range of female measurements of the Harappan skeletons. On the other hand the estimated mean stature of the male skeletons fall within the range of the average values of stature observed in the living populations of the Punjab. Speaking on the variations observed in some cases, it has been maintained that these represent a

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different population group that immigrated into the valley. Such a variation is normally expected within a spectrum of variations in a single population group. On the whole, it has been maintained that the scientific study of long headed people of Burzahom shows no marked difference from those of Harappans and thus establishes an ethnic affinity as well.[151] From the west, the Iranian influence, though of remote antiquity, continued in later periods and exercised predominant sway over the language, customs and dress of the people in the valley soon after the eclipse of Hindu rule.

Kashmir neolithic, therefore, portrays a well stratified society capable of fixed settlement. Lying on the crossroad of many nations, the valley has witnessed the continuous movement of the multi-ethnic groups and has shared from time to time the effects of rise and spread of civilization.[152] The waves of immigration came from the North-west passes and on the basis of physio-geographical relationship and similarities, the whole of Central Asia including Kashmir is marked as one centre. As compared to other cities in India, Golbai Sasan, district Puri, Orissa, has yielded a good variety of bone tools but corresponding tools in stone are not well represented.[153] The results, of course, are of considerable interest but still cannot compare with the cultural wealth of Burzahom. The human migration and widespread settlement in the valley was possible only because of favourable climatic stability. Even though the neolithic people of the valley maintained contacts with several outside regions[154] it mostly remained isolated due to its geographical situation and as such maintained its own distinctive character. They had their own inherent indigenous talent as is evident from the varieties of tools especially the bone tools which they produced with an astonishing economy of efforts, perfection and with high degree of standardization. They also assimilated new techniques, enriched their economy in whatever way it suited them if and when they came into contact with outsiders. Increasing size of Neolithic settlements in the valley, highly organised economy, effective handling of raw material, emphasis on the control of environment, cultural contacts with the people of other regions despite limited means of communication and at the same time maintaining their skill and standard of workmanship make it unique as compared to other Neolithic Cultures of India. The cultural patterns of the Neolithic period in the valley had profound effect in shaping and development of cultural trends in the subsequent periods of its history as well.

3. Megalithic Period

Megaliths are the most remarkable prehistoric monuments. They include Menhirs, and alignments, stone circles, henges and many kinds of chamber tombs. Out of these Menhirs are massive, tall, verticle standing stones either singly or in

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groups. These were generally set up by the end of neolithic period. Their installation required the maximum physical and mental concentration but the purpose for which these were erected in the valley mysteriously alludes us.

The Megalithic culture in Kashmir, like the Neolithic culture of the valley, does not bear any affinity with such of the structures found in the sub-continent. This period follows the Neolithic sequence at the excavated sites of Burzahom and Gufkral. These Megaliths are here represented by Menhir type of large stones. Mostly these upright stones are found in groups and in very exceptional cases are located alone. The other interesting observation is that at some places these are overlying the Neolithic settlements as at Burzahom, Gufkral, Hariparigom, Begund, Brah etc while as at Waztal, Tarakpur, Sombur, Pampur, Dadsar etc no such relics are found.

The Megalithic culture besides Menhirs is represented by no less than a dozen monuments which comprise cist, Pit-circles, dolmenoid cists, cist graves, cairn-circles, urn burials, hood stones etc. Peninsular India was once the strong-hold of the 'megalithic culture' but now these have been found at many places in North India like Waghodur and Murad Memon near Karachi, Asota near Mardan in the North West Frontier Pakistan, Baluchistan (Pakistan), Leh (Ladakh), Burzahom (Srinagar), Pampur, Gufkral, Hariparigom, Sombur, Dadsar (Pulwama), Tarakpur (Baramulla), Brah, Waztal (Anantnag), all in J & K State, Deosa (Jaipur), Deodhara (Almora), Khera (Fatehpur Sikri, Agra) and in the districts of Mirzapur, Allahabad, etc. In the north-east region, these are also found in Assam and in the borders of Burma to Central India. In the other parts of the world these are found in the lands bordering upon the Mediterranean and the Atlante, in the Caucasus and in Iran. Barring few places, all these monuments are sepulchral, commemorative or ritualistic in character. However, satisfactory associations for Menhirs are scarcely obtainable.[155] The investigations have revealed that peninsular India occupies an intermediary position between Europe and West Asia on the one hand and east and south-east Asia on the other.[156]

The simplest form of megalithic monuments are the Menhirs. As in the valley of Kashmir these are found in many places in Europe, concentration being at Carnac in France. The site of Carnac had finest monuments of alignment type arranged in groups each consisting of multiple rows, 10 to 13 in number which ended at semi-circles of standing stones. The area is also known for a series of long cairns covering funerary chambers and cists of mid-neolithic to early bronze age. All kinds of legends have sprung up about these huge standing stones, and even now it is believed that these carry some strange supernatural powers. In the valley people attribute these to 'bride and bridegroom with guests' who have been turned into monolithic stones because of their wrong doings and so on. These thus com-

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memorate some forgotten event that occurred where they are now located or mark a spot that was presumed to carry some magical or religious power. Whatever the purpose might have been for installing these big stones upright, these required concerted efforts on the part of the primitive people in moving or transporting them from the places of the extraction to the selected spots. Fear of the unknown, of higher powers, strange but mighty beliefs could have been the positive reasons. These, however, bridge the gap between the New Stone Age and the Metal Age.[157]

Literary references do mention some kind of megalithic ritual in the *Rigveda*, the *Atharvaveda* and Tamil literature but still the original source of megaliths in India remains unanswered.[158] This is particularly a puzzling issue in respect of Kashmir where the megaliths are not associated with any skeletal remains which is a unique phenomenon so far as this cultural trend is concerned.

In India megaliths are generally found with the iron implements and the typical black and red ware ascribed to Dravidians followed by Painted Grey Ware people who are bracketed with Aryans. In some excavated sites, the stratigraphic evidence has shown that the megaliths follow without break upon the earlier Neolithic-Charcolithic culture dated 1000-1300 B.C.[159]

Cist graves and other types of Megalithic monuments bearing elaborate mortuary traditions were classified as 'prehistoric,'[160] but subsequently it was mentioned that these bear no relation with the neolithic culture.[161] The group of Menhir type of stones have culminated into an impressive monument of Stonehenge in plains of Salisbury, South England. As observed in Kashmir, some of the Menhirs here also bear cup marks. The experts believe that these Menhirs in Europe were ceremonial stones which where installed by the prehistoric people to represent the movement of the Sun and the Moon in relation to the sky.[162] The Stonehenge was regarded to be the Sun Temple by the people who were mainly agriculturists[163] though an expert on Stonehenge doubted that the illiterate or barbarous community like those of the builders of Stonehenge structures could have ever thought of such an astronomical instrument.[164] However, some sort of great religious fervour must have persuaded them to work so strenuously in erecting the remains of a circle of large standing stones. The group of Menhirs at both the excavated sites of Burzahom and Gufkral in the valley form a semi-circle and as such fall under the alignment type of Megaliths. Some of these carry cup markers also. The bone and stone tools continue from the Neolithic levels but are comparatively less in number and bear polish of a low order. The cultural sequence at both the sites reveals that these were erected towards the end of Neolithic period.

In the earlier stage of this period at Burzahom, some sherds of black burnished ware of Period II were encountered but these were of poor fabric and were devoid of polish. Wheel made gritty red ware predominates. The main representative

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shapes are storage pots with bulbous bodies of a coarse fabric. Some miniature vases of the earlier phase in thin red ware were also found.[165] Very little evidence of iron has come from this period but Black and Red Ware usually associated with the Megaliths in the south was conspicuously absent. On the other hand Gufkral excavations revealed a good number of iron objects in the form of points and rods. A copper bangle is also reported. The presence of such a limited variety of iron or metal objects does not help us in demarcating a relation with the Megalithic culture of the valley. There is no uniformity of finds at the two excavated sites even if they belong to an identical cultural zone. The Megaliths represented by Menhirs fall into general time bracket of 1000 B.C. to 700 B.C. and are undoubtedly non-sepulchral in character. They, therefore, indicate a kind of socio-religious custom which prevailed over a large part of India at a certain chronological stage of Indian history.[166] Wheel made pots were in abundance. These pots were in dull red ware and the shapes included rimless jars, bowls, long necked jars, globular jars etc. Among the stone tools, ring stones both finished and unfinished were recovered in good numbers. No doubt the percentage of bone tools decreased but new finds were marked by bone handles made mostly from the tibia of the sheep or goat. A fine cobbler's awl was also recovered. Besides, sheep and goat, bones of dogs, pigs, ibex and fowl were also found. Rice which is said to have been introduced here was cultivated in abundance in this period.[167] Against this, the investigation of botanical remains at Burzahom has not yielded any grains of rice.[168] Summarising the results of the investigation, it has been stated that as wheat and barley are found from the Neolithic to Megalithic periods at Burzahom, and in upper Neolithic phase of Gufkral and almost in all the phases of Semthan excavations, it can be stated that perhaps rice was introduced somewhat around 1000 B.C. It has further been claimed that the introduction of rice into the valley from Central Asia is of remote possibility and its cultivation in the valley must have taken place from the plains, possibly from the Indo-Gangetic area along with the migration of the people.[169]

The spread of megalithism into India has travelled because of folk wanderings, missionary activities or through imitation of one tribe by another.[170] The megaliths have world-wide cultural contacts but these do not follow uniform sequence of cultures. In India while more than 200 megalithic sites have been excavated, the cultural ecology of the people who were associated with the megaliths remains far from satisfactory.[171] So also the significance of Menhirs in Kashmir remains enigmatic. Structural remains at both the sites of Burzahom and Gufkral are marked by rubble stones which is a noteworthy change from the earlier type of construction. These natural stones though roughly shaped and generally tapering towards the top are of varying sizes. The longest one at Gufkral is 6.55 mts long and the length of the smallest size of Menhir is only 2.90 mts. Here at the site all the sixteen Menhir

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stones—the largest number as compared to Burzahom are fallen on the ground, some by human vandalism and some by natural catastrophe. Grouped almost together, they still pose an impressive scene. They lack stone circle or cromlech or cist grave formations and on the other hand their alignment type has a common feature with such structures found in Europe,[172] where these are defined as religious structures having started a contact in 1500 B.C. with Mycenean Greece and Minoan Create.[173] In the valley their installation also carried religious sentiments of the people who installed them with most ambitious zeal. Upright erection of these stones may have served the purpose of observing the movements of the Sun and Moon which could help them in predicting the climatic fluctuation. The climatic change exerted its most powerful influence over their subsistence. Apart from this, such monoliths, in course of time, were regarded as symbols of extraordinary power and began to be worshipped as '*Svayambhu* (self-born) images'. These as such are the beginning of stone worship in Kashmir. Surprisingly enough, it may be indicated that on one of the still standing Menhirs at Dadsar (Tral) just below the excavated site of Gufkral, an image of a deity in a seated posture has been carved, though of course at a later date.

Finds of copper and bronze objects found in Megalithic graves of Iran, Baluchistan or in the south indicate again foreign contacts from the direction of Iran. On linguistic investigation as well, it is claimed that Dravidians introduced the tradition of Megaliths in the North West India who after receiving the most powerful blow from the invading Indo-Iranian people or the Aryans lost the battle of coexistence and thus were pushed from the north to the south.[174]

In Swat valley, the excavation of iron-bearing graves (c. 900-600 B.C.) are of rectangular construction having stone slabs and orthostats. Besides iron, copper tools were also found. Some pottery types suggest Indo-Aryan association.[175] As in the Neolithic period, the valley of Kashmir has not remained isolated from the cultural influence of these Megalithic folk since a corresponding variety of cist graves has recently been reported from a high plateau on the left bank of river Liddar near Pahalgam. The graves are like box chambers with orthostats on the four sides surmounted by cap stones. The grave goods included pottery (some pots besmeared with red ochre internally), copper rings and wire, shell and some such objects. In one of the smaller pots with flaring rim, smoothened neck and sides, a tooth and some isolated bones probably of a human being were also reported.[176] Without recording any chronological data at the site, the four slab-stones have been extracted.[177] Again it indicates a link with the north-western region with which the Kashmir valley has had close links from very early times. This has now also to be viewed in view of the limited occurrence of iron in the Megalithic context of Gufkral around 1000 B.C.[178] Chronological data has been thrown up by northerly

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sites like Pirak in the Kachhi plain, the Gandhara graves between Chitral and Taxila, the megalithic level of Gufkral in Kashmir or also from the evidence obtained from Hallur in the South.[179]

It is, however, interesting to note that the Megalithism represented by dolmens, stone-circles and Menhirs is a living tradition amongst the Moria Gonds of Bastar,[180] the Bondos and Gadabas of Orissa,[181] the Oraons and Mundas of Chota Nagpur[182] and the Khasis and Nagas of Assam.[183] While as the north-eastern Indian megaliths may carry south-east Asian affiliations the north-western megalithic pattern including Kashmir and even the peninsular India points to the influence from the West. Separated by such a vast expanse of land and sea, the fundamental differences in the Megalithic structures are obvious.[184] This is more significant in Kashmir while these monuments carry different cultural material and present a very puzzling problem. The entire area, therefore, seems to be peculiarly suited for further probe. For the present we have to be content that with further immigrants from outside the valley, the people began to worship the forces of nature and standing Menhirs initiated them for the image worship which 'comes plainly into view towards the upper level of savagery.'[185]

Thermoluminescence dating technique recently applied to a pottery sample from Burzahom has confirmed the previous age estimate. The pottery sample from late neolithic period showed an age of 3300 yr. B.P. ± 231 yr. and this confirms the age of the megalithic period as well.[186]

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4
Advancement of Religious Ideas

The Neolithic Culture and its interaction between the valley and the neighbouring regions of North West India (the territories of Gandhara and the territories along the river Indus) despite limited means of communication and that too over inhospitable mountains resulted in more widespread folk movements. This, in course of time, favoured the advancement of religious ideas which were powerful enough as to have a profound and lasting effect in changing the socio-religious life of the people. These ideas met, mingled and with the aid of local genius became a unifying force, an element which is traditionally maintained by the locals even now and which has stood like a rock against the spirit of disintegration.

There are now ample archaeological evidences which indicate that the prehistoric people of the valley had contacts with the Indus valley people by the end of the closing centuries of second millennium B.C. The most remarkable effect of such a contact with them or through them with far away countries in the west aroused sympathetic and appreciative religious conception in the minds of the people. The people began to worship the stones of peculiar or uncanny features[1] and this type of reverence to such natural stones formed an integral part of the local culture. A considerable significance was attached to Menhirs. The transport of these heavy stones with the aid of primitive devices, some of which were roughly cut or chiselled, and then having installed them at a particular site was not an easy assignment but involved enormous man power. Deeply influenced by religio-cultural tradition of Harappans, the people of the valley were already clothed in religious beliefs and rituals. Religious experience of a man is guided by several different shades of religious beliefs and attitudes.[2] The Menhirs in the valley are now illustrated as ceremonial stones and not as commemorative monuments. These bear carved cup-masks and some of these are chiselled. In prehistoric period, in Europe also there are instances of carvings on Menhirs. In England and more so in France, many such stones are richly ornamented with carvings represented by swords, daggers, human faces and some are clearly phallic in shape.[3] Rotary forms like concentric circles or spirals, triangles and such other abstract forms were difficult to

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be carved. However, the rod or straight lined forms on the Menhirs always represented males and other round forms the females.[4] Right from the ancient times, such monolithic stones with carvings were worshipped as symbolic representation of Shiva and Shakti. *Phallus* (in stones and terracottas) and the perforated stones recognized as female organ or *Yoni* (representing Shiva and Shakti respectively) go back to Harappan times. The tradition of worshipping the terracotta *phallic* form of Shiva is still in vogue. On Mahashivratri, one of the most important and popular festivals of Kashmiris, this form of *Linga* is worshipped with utmost devotion. Any negligence in doing so is taken as a bad omen. *Linga* worship represents a united force which fills up the vacuum existing between the heaven and the earth.

The tradition of worshipping the trinity also is old one. The three snowy pyramidal summits in the valley to the west of Banihal were regarded as the seats of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma[5]—the trinity aspect of Mohenjodaro[6] Shiva. The highest peak of Haramukh (ancient Haramukhuta or Shiva's diadem) in Sind valley is supposed to be the favourite residence of Shiva. Similarly, Mount Mahadeva to the east of Dal lake was revered as '*Svayambhu*' (self-born) image of Shiva, who is said to have directed Vasugupta (beginning of 9th century A.D.) to see for himself Sutras inscribed on a rock known to this day as Shankar Pal (the rock of Shiva) near here. These very Sutras, as revealed by Lord himself gave birth to famous Shaiva philosophy which is the most valuable contribution of Kashmir to Indian culture.[7] A great sanctity is attached to 'self-created' forms of 'Linga' and also symbolic representation of Parvati in a small cave of Harsheshvara (Lord of happiness) on a hillock to the north of village Khunamoh (ancient Khunamusa)[8] situated at a distance of 14 kms south-east of Srinagar. Foot prints of a cow are carved on the external fringe of the narrow entrance to the cave. It is said that the cow coming up to the cave would give secretly milk to the occupants of the cave who were none else but Shiva and Parvati and when their existence in the cave became known, they got themselves turned into stones.[9] The Kashmiri poet Bilhana was born here and he has in his chief work[10] referred it as 'the ancient home of wonderful legends'. In a similar situation is the Dhyaneshwar (Lord of meditation) cave on a hill 20 kms to the east of Bandipura, Baramulla district. Here among other carvings and sacred symbols are the stone hoofs of the cow on its ceiling from which water dips below over the Linga.

Separate shrines were dedicated to Shakti—the universal conception of Mother Goddess. Springs and uncanny stones were supposed to be her manifestation through various forms and names. The most important among such shrines were Tripursundari in Kulgam, Trisandhya in Anantnag, Jvalamukhi near Khrew in Pulwama, Sharika at Srinagar, Sharada in Teethwal (now in Pakistan), Rajni at village Tullamulla in Ganderbal, Shaliputri at Baramulla, Bhadrakali in Handwara

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and so on. Natural stones with carvings of circles or mystical diagrams carried enormous importance as Srichakra at Hariparbat, Rajnichakra at Khir Bhawani, Ganderbal, Jwalamukhichakra on the rocky hill at Khrew.[11] It is customary to lay down such diagrams on any important functions and as such are worshipped even during these days. The worship of 'Mothers' is identical with those of Shiva's Shaktis. Shiva devoid of Shakti means nothing. Both are two inseparable aspects of the absolute reality.[12] The matrchakra or circle of Mothers as referred to by Kalhana at various occasions has subsequently given birth to the conception of Sapta Matrikas (Seven Mothers) represented by Brahmani, Maheshvari, Kumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda. Varahamihira in his *Brhatsamhita* refers to the worship of the Matrganas (the Saptamatrikas) as the chief manifestation of Shakti cult. *Varah Purana* has added Yogeshvari also to the list and the group of Mothers is named as 'Ashtamatrikas'.[13] The mystical circles or Devi Chakras of early period have now appeared in the form of different aspects of Mother Goddesses (Ashtamatrikas) in order to help Shiva in his struggle with the demon and his consequent victory over him. Kalhana while referring to circle of Mothers meant that these Mother Goddesses were placed around a shrine dedicated to Shiva.[14] These were also to guard frontier passes or stations 'dvara'.[15] Some of these Matrika images have come from the ancient Shiva's shrine constructed at the capital site of the valley Purananadhisthana (modern Pandrethan). Most of these are more than life-size and display a remarkable iconographic representation.[16] These present a Hellenistic influence as is observed in Gandhara sculptures and seem to be earlier than previously presumed.[17] In one of the remotest out-stations at village Lashteal, Kalaruch, district Kupwara about 103 kms north-east of Srinagar, eight niches have been carved on an escarpment measuring 13 metres high and 8 metres broad. The ninth niche to its east is carved on a smaller rock which measures about 4 metres high and 3 metres in breadth. The sizes of the niches range from 1.25 to 2 metres and show interesting features of trefoil arches which adorned the temple complexes of Kashmir in mediaeval period. The niches dramatically overlook the picturesque green valley below and the Kalarouch Nallah which joins Lolab (ancient Laulaha)[18]—a seat of formidable tribe of Damaras who played a significant role in the history of Kashmir during the time of the first and second Lohara dynasties (1003-1171).[19] These niches in a row were meant for Ashtamatrikas (eight mothers) and for Shiva. No image of any god or goddesses could be traced. However, an evidence of a stepped platform in front of the niches could be located.[20]

In the valley, the Mother Goddess with a number of different names acquired such an importance that She was adored by the people as a powerful force, able to fulfil their desires as compared to other divine forces. As a result of this, the worship of Ashta matrikas was believed to represent the motherhood of the family

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and of the society. A specially religious ceremony locally known as Devigon (Devigana—the group of Devis or Matrikas) is invariably held before the marriage ceremony of a son or a daughter or on the occasion of *Yagnopavit* (sacred thread), ceremony of the former, eight pottery dishes filled with 'Khir' (sweet dish of cooked rice with milk and sugar) are set aside in the name of these goddesses and then are handed over to elderly women directly connected with the son or the daughter for whom the ceremony is held. The worship of these Matrikas has, therefore, its own glorious past and the evidence obtained from the archaeological sites lends confirmation to this sacred tradition, the roots of which are found from an earlier period. This domestic cult of Mother Goddess, no doubt, was a widespread feature of the ancient world.[21]

Another religious inspiration of profound significance was that of Naga worship. The popular conception of Nagas is that they are represented by snakes living in springs or lakes which they protect. As such they are known as 'spring deities'.[22] Throughout *Rajatarangini* they are described as human beings both as males and females and are credited with supernatural powers. The literary evidence now supported by archaeological data, is that Nagas were civilized as compared to barbaric stock of Pisachas. They had sufficient understanding of the builders of superb structures of Mohenjodaro and Harappans—their houses, baths and reservoirs. On their arrival in the valley they took their residences near the springs and lakes with which the valley was favourably endowed. This they did as they were conscious of the fact that Indus valley people attached too much importance to bath. The chief of the Nagas was easily recognizable by his hair tufts dripping with water.[23] They obviously had confrontation with the stone age people on the one side and the people who came after them. The Nagas, it is said, may have mediated between Pisachas and Indo-Aryan settlers.[24] Even the Nagas are described as a branch of Asuras.[25] They had conflicts with the advancing groups of Aryans.[26] In the valley they were praised when it rained but were hated when the crop was destroyed by hail-storm. In that situation they were captivated in fetters and were freed by a noble-minded king Meghvahana who had come from Gandhara.[27] The Nagas of the valley, it appears, had some connection with such of the tribes in the Khotan oasis which is corroborated by identical events. Ashoka's son Jalauka entered the lakes of Nagas by stopping the waters and had intercourse with Naga-maidens so as to give charm to his body.[28] More or less on a similar pattern Hieun Tsang narrates a legend as to how the widow of a Naga—a Nagin ceased the waters of a stream east of Khotan's capital. She was pleased to let the water flow when a minister of noble birth sacrificed himself by entering the stream and married her. Stein during his expedition there in 1900-1901 discovered a painting (ascribable to 7th-8th century A.D.) depicting a graceful lady in her youth with exquisite physical charm. She is shown

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rising from the waters of a tank or a lotus lake. On her right is a nude child. Stein identified the lady as the Nagin in the midst of water and the nude child as the minister who disappeared in the water.[29] Though this has been differently described by the scholars but the literary or legendary versions of the two events point to a common heritage.

It is interesting to note that the worship of Nagin as snake goddess was prevalent in the west as well. An excellent and charming statue of snake goddess in ivory and gold dated 16th century B.C. comes from Minoan—the island of Crete in eastern Mediterranean. She is dressed in a typical Cretan costume, flaring skirts and with exposed breasts.[30] Crete occupied a prominent position in the development of the first distinctively Greek and also European Civilization. Terracotta figurines of snake goddess have been discovered from Gumla ascribable to pre-Harappan levels, i.e. before 2500 B.C. and from other sites in North West Frontier Province in Pakistan.[31] In Vedic literature great respect and devotion is bestowed upon Nagas termed as semi-divine beings. It is, therefore, evident that the religious or ritual traditions of the prehistoric culture varied in the subsequent development of human society but the purpose more or less remained the same and in due course of time became embodied in the religio-ritualistic practices of the great literate civilizations of the mankind.

The study of ethnogenesis of the Dravidian people has so far disclosed that certain characteristic features of the proto-Dravidians, which disclose the roots of the Harappan civilization have later given birth to the proto-urban and urban culture of the Indus valley in the 3rd millennium B.C.[32] The early Aryan society had made room for the Indian society as a result of which it is very difficult to isolate Aryan and non-Aryan elements.[33] On the basis of latest studies, it is argued that the Harappans of Indus period were themselves the progenitors of Aryans.[34] The culture of the Vedic Aryans must have as such mixed with that of the original inhabitants of India and become integrated in the field of religion, economy and social structure.[35] Kalhana also refers to Dravidians who lived some where in the valley before the advent of Indus valley people.[36] The former were sorcerers[37] while the latter were Brahmans[38] —the highest caste of the Aryans. There is no denying the fact that the expansion of Aryans took place from the north and north-west of India along Kashmir and the Himalayas.[39] They stressed to worship fire, Sun, rivers and other natural forces, and which system of worship is prevalent even now. The cultural influence of Aryans was much more than the preceding tribes. This is obvious we do not get any stone, bone, ivory or terracotta images of Mother Goddess, Shiva, Naga or of any other such elements in the excavations of Neolithic sites. We have, on the other hand, come across the evidence of contacts with the people outside the valley prior to the advent of Aryans. The archaeological research has now thrown

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new light on the continuation of post-Harappan or pre N.B.P. people in the valley in a definite cultural context.[40] The latest supposition is that the late Harappan settlements are associated with the Indo-Aryans or one of the groups of Indo-Aryan tribes.[41] The natural stone 'Shilla' of Mother Goddess with Her Yantra at Hari Parbat was upto recent times without any temple erected over it so that the cosmic dance of Yantra on the full moon nights could not be obstructed.[42] Such local traditions still in vogue mark events of great cultural significance inherited from ancient times. The greatest contribution of Indo-Aryans was their language. The present Kashmiri language is an off-shoot of Daradic language which 'undoubtedly belongs to Aryan stock'.[43] Both from the point of language and physiognomy, the Darads are an Aryan race.[44] Some of the Darads inhabiting Gilgit or Astor still carry strange and curious manners. Mostly being agriculturists, they respect their cow, do not even drink her milk and do not make butter from it. This points towards their exalted race to which they belong.[45] Similar races of pure Aryan blood are found in Kargil and Durchik[46] and the present day survivors have been noticed as Brukpa Darads of Dah, Hano and Garkun in Ladakh.[47] Being descendants of Aryans, their features resemble with those of Kashmiris.[48]

The land of Darads was Daraddesa or Daratpuri—the town of Darads,[49] was an important staging-point beyond the frontiers of the valley. Throughout the history of Kashmir, they have, as an independent tribe, played magnificent role in the socio-political life of Kashmiris. Their valour, subjugation, mutual understanding with the rulers of Kashmir and their rise as an formidable power has been frequently referred to by Kalhana[50] and Bilhana,[51] and in isolated references by later historians as well.[52]

Recently for the first time in the valley itself, an ancient habitational site has been spotted which goes by the name of Darads. The place locally known as 'Darad Kot' is situated on the highest terrace of village Huthmura (ancient Shaktamatha) overlooking river Liddar on Anantnag-Pahalgam road. It is set in a similar environment as that of the original home of Darads. Here archaeological remains in the form of tile pavement enclosed by a diaper pebble wall which in itself is further strengthened by a rubble structure have been excavated. An exciting discovery was of plain grey ware under this structure which could take the date of the site much more earlier than the structure itself assigned to 3rd century A.D.[53] though an earlier date for the tiles is not ruled out. The plain grey ware is anterior to Painted Grey Ware.[54]

It is now evident that Kashmir was very much within the reach of Aryans. Further the archaeological research has recognized that the pre-Harappans and Harappans are not far removed from the neolithic time bracket of Kashmir.[55]

Chakra-Puja or the worship of *Chakras* or *Mandalas* (circular diagrams of pat-

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terns) depicting Shakti (Female power) was related to the worship of Tantras which later on developed into an esoteric movement.[56] Tantra is a generic term for a class of religious and magical works and its performance runs side by side with those of Vedic ceremonies. So the Tantric worship does not differ from that of Vedas.[57]

In the valley, the aniconic objects like *Svayambhu* or self-wrought representations of Shiva or Shakti or other symbols are still held in high veneration by the people though in their religious outlook far reaching changes have now taken place. Their object of worship is associated with the rituals relating now to the cults of different divinities.

The religious performances in the valley as such comprise the harmonized blending of the cults depicting Vedic, Shaivite, Vaishnavite, and Shakta. In all the ceremonies, the Vedic pantheon plays a prominent part. In the performances of *Shradha* rites, the Vedic deities receive worship through the fire, Shaivite through the phallic emblem of cooked rice and Shakta through a lamp.

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5

New Light on the History and Archaeology

It has been well demonstrated how legends or traditions so far miserably represented stand scrutinized now to a great extent. In the modern scientific world all the legends need to be tested in the field.[1] More so, it is only through archaeological stratification that various stages of human achievement or cultural inter-relationship is known.[2] Both on exploration or excavation sides, Kashmir archaeology now boasts of its brilliant achievements and has thrown its field for further probe and research. Excavations at Burzahom—an international site or at Gufkral have revealed definite clues on the first settled life of early Kashmiris. The cultural contacts that followed in a still wider context have been recognised in the excavations at Semthan.

Semthan (79° 9′ Long. 33° 48′ Lat.) is a village situated about 44 kms from Srinagar in Bijibehara town, district Anantnag on Srinagar-Jammu highway.

The Vitasta (Jhelum) near the village makes a great bend and to its left rises an elevated plateau which is still known by the name of Taskdar (ancient Chakradhara).[3] Its archaeological importance had been detailed out much earlier.[4] The place was known as one of the famous and the oldest religious shrines in the valley.[5] The region has witnessed long series of events which are mentioned by Kalhana,[6] Mankha,[7] Jonaraja,[8] Shrivara,[9] Jayadratha,[10] Hassan Shah[11] and the Mahatmya of the holy place.[12] Surface finds of coins and sculptures have also confirmed the archaeological potentiality of the site.[13] With the procurement of the Northern Black Polished Ware (NBP) in a stratified strata and being the first discovery of its kind in the valley,[14] there arose a need for further probing so as to know the strata below it and thus build up a cultural sequence of the site in a more classified manner.

The last phase of occupation at Burzahom has been recognized as early historical and at Gufkral as historical. However, at both the sites the settlement pattern, the form of houses and to a great extent the cultural material are identical. Still there were vital missing links and the Semthan excavations have provided a clue to some of these mysterious problems. The importance of the site apparently becomes significant.

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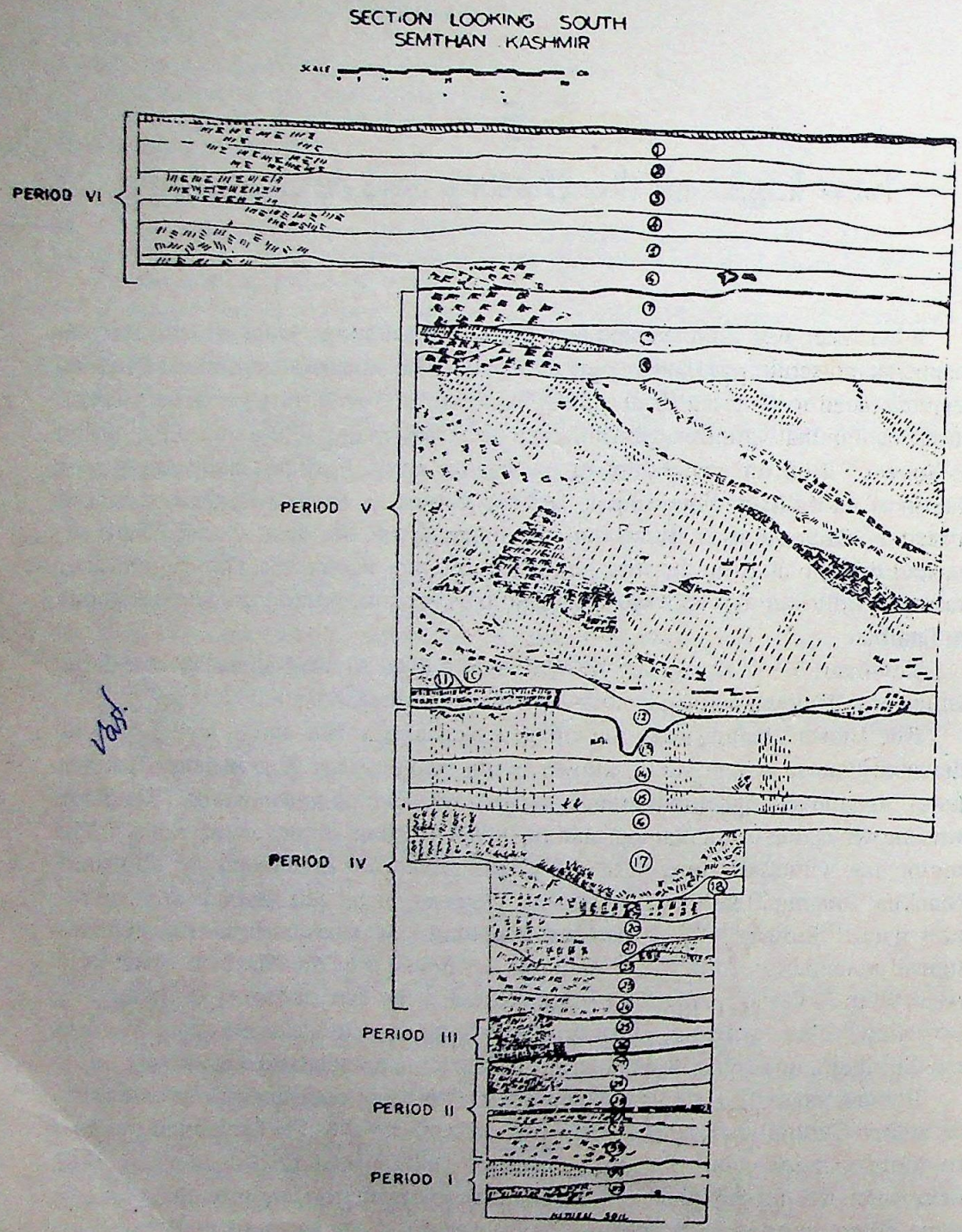

Fig. 17. Section showing cultural sequence from Semthan, Kashmir (after G.S. Gaur, A.S.I).

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The Neolithic culture when at its peak in the valley presented pre-Harappan or Harappan influences and apart from other cultural material, the presence of ceramic elements has been fully recognized. It has, however, been noticed that they could not dominate the people even if sporadic evidences are found in later periods also. The Harappan survivors continued even in historical period at Gufkral as is clear from the ceramic traditions.[15] On the basis of pottery particularly in relation to its composition of clay, firing, ingredients and surface finish, the cultural sequence of the site at Semthan has been arranged in six periods and presents an impressive data towards the continuity of historical events in the valley. Both on account of size and diversity of finds, the results of excavation will help in tracing the obscure points still distinct in the historical versions pertaining to Kashmir. In his investigation, the co-excavator has been bold enough to reiterate that 'Semthan excavation is a step towards bridging the gap between the Neolithic and Kushana periods in Kashmir'.[16] The archaeological evidence is certainly much more reliable than anything in literature.[17] Patient research is gradually unveiling the past of Kashmir and for the present an attempt has been made to bring forth the rise and fall of the tide of human endeavour through the centuries in Kashmir within the broad outline of the periods sequentially arranged at Semthan.

Period I—Pre-Northern Black Polished Ware (700-500 B.C.)

This period is marked by regular building activity demonstrated by successive floor levels. The people of this period, built house walls both of rammed clay and pebbles and used copper, terracotta and bone beads and tools.[18] Iron is absent. The significant discovery of the period is the presence of pottery which has been classified into following five fabrics.[19]

Fabric A

This group is marked by sturdy red ware treated with a fine slip. The colour ranges from orange red to plump red. The most striking type is a composite form of a bowl on a stand. Both are centrally hollow. It also carries an addition of a ring of a thick ledge splayed out like a dish luted round the bowl. This is a typical Harappan form.[20] Mostly this form like other shapes has been made on the wheel except the dish-ledge which is made by hand and then rotated on the wheel for perfecting the process of luting. Such forms bear generic relation with the late phase of the post-Harappan pottery of Banawali and Bara phase of the plains of Punjab and Haryana.[21] The other shapes include variety of bowls, vases, vessels, flasks, jars and knobbed lids.

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Fabric B

This is marked by wheel made thin and fine red ware. It is made of fine clay and the slip varies from brownish red to deep red. The shapes of Fabric A mostly continue here as well.

Fabric C

It is defined by thick ochrous red ware made on wheel and the shapes are represented by wide mouthed vessels, small vases and pots with globular bodies (Kashmiri *chod*). This is a widely distributed fabric and is generally succeeded by Painted Grey Ware (PGW).[22] It is derivative from late Harappans. Immersed in water for a long time, the ware is mostly waterlogged. As such the slip of the ware is rubbed off with the slightest touch. Ochre coloured ware comes from the sites lying in Ganga-Yumuna Doab where the area had frequently been subjected to flooding. Semthan plateau at this level must have also been subjected to floods because it formed one of the alluvial plains of Jhelum river. It has quite rightly been observed that the edges or the surface of this ware easily wear off by rubbing. This ware, however, has been bracketed as inferior Harappan.[23] Some of the sherds of this ware carry externally incised patterns of petals and wavy lines.

Fabric D

This fabric is represented by the presence of thick Grey Ware. It is characterised by two distinct wares, viz. burnished grey of thicker quality and the other an ordinary grey ware. The common shapes are small sized vases, bowls and rimless dishes. It has, however, been maintained that there is no relationship with similar type of fabric encountered in the neolithic levels at Burzahom or at Gufkral.

Fabric E

It is a dull red ware, hand-made, ill fired and crude fabric made of poor clay containing stone grits. The common shapes observed are jars, bowls without curved rims and internally hollow lids. Some of the specimens of this ware were found in association with the NBP in the two top layers of Period I.

The ceramic cultural phase of Period I shows a remarkable continuity of sequence which by and large points to regular contacts with the people outside the valley. Being unrelated to ceramic traditions of Burzahom where we had direct infiltration of pre-Harappan ceramic element in Period II for a short duration, the present evidence at Semthan 'definitely points to the arrival of a new set of people possibly from the plains of sub-continent.'[24] However, the palaeobotanical investigations on plant remains from Semthan have confirmed this assertion. It has been established that the people were conversant with the knowledge of the cultivation of rice also in addition to wheat and barley cereals which were present throughout the

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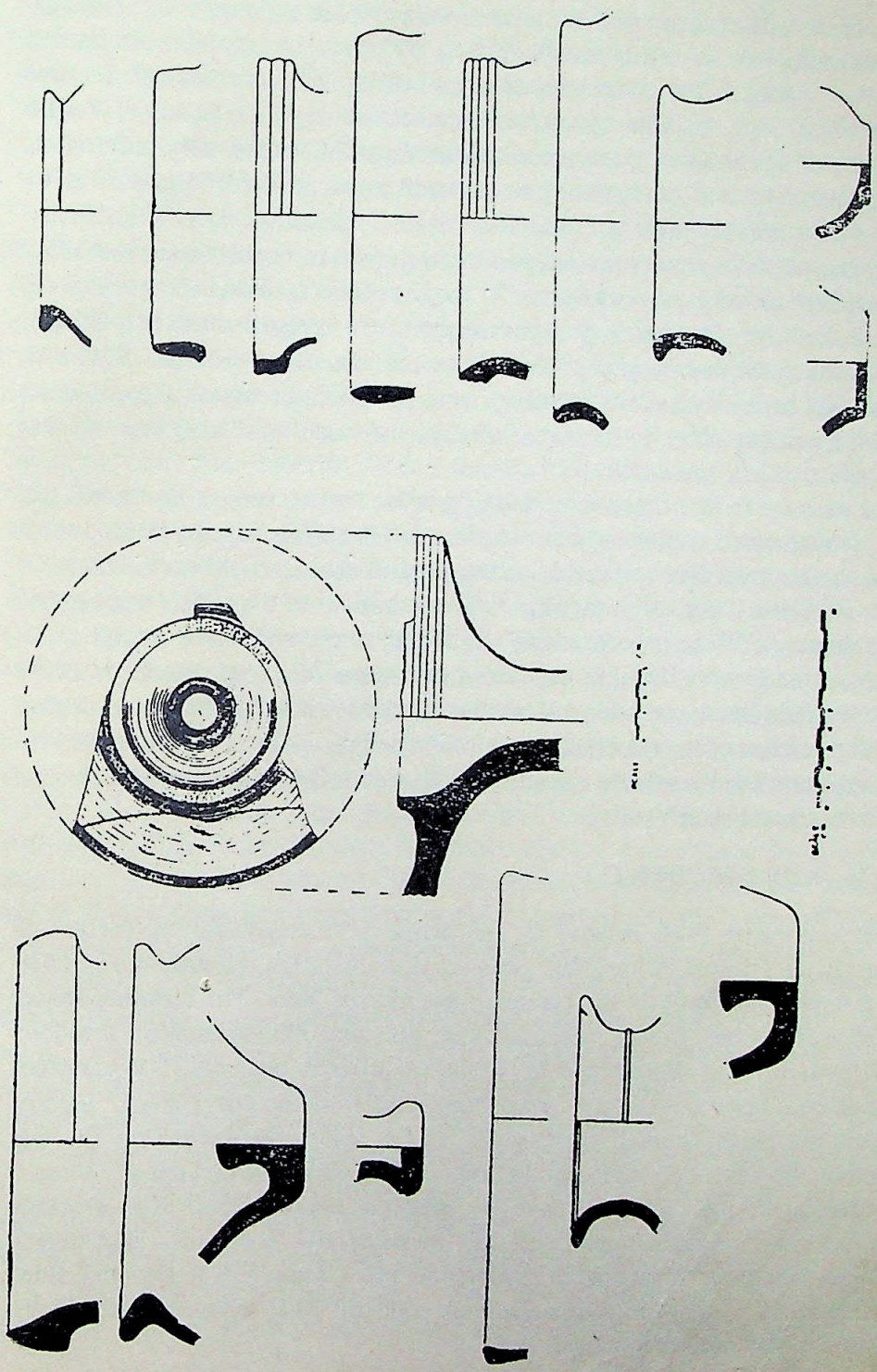

Fig. 18. Pottery shapes from Semthan, Period I—pre-NBP level (after G.S. Gaur, A.S.I.).

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neolithic levels at Burzahom and at Gufkral. Summing up the results of investigation, the experts have recorded that the people of Period I had wide contacts and that this knowledge of the cultivation of wheat, barley and especially of rice was gathered and brought by them directly to Semthan through the plains of Punjab during the closing centuries of the second millennium B.C. or the early centuries of the first millennium B.C. but certainly before the introduction of NBP culture in the valley.[25] Wheat was the principal crop. Rice which is the staple food of Kashmiris presently has played a very important part in the growth of population as the valley was found best suited for its cultivation. It has also been seen that the habitational deposits at Semthan are rich in phosphate contents in comparison to non-agricultural soils which are poor in phosphate.[26] The weeds associated with the cultivation of wheat and barley indicate a primitive style of farming. Among the wood remains, blue pine prominently figured as this type of wood must have been used as building material and fire-wood.

Thus we have for the first time in a stratigraphic context some concrete but still slightly demonstrated archaeological evidence of Harappans or post-Harappans at Semthan which according to present archaeological setting could not be taken as intrusive elements. They had, it appears, confrontation with the people accustomed to neolithic way of living as a result of which they could not extend the sphere of involvement much more, however advanced they were. The confrontation with the original settlers of the land continued (as discussed elsewhere) till there was decline in the conservatism of the material culture of the people which according to present assessment comes in the middle of the first millennium B.C., i.e. with the advent of Northern Black Polished Ware.

Period II—NBP (500-200 B.C.)

Over one metre thick deposit of this period is distinguished by the use of Northern Black Polished Ware (NBP) in association with red and grey wares. It depicted a broad uniformity in the ceramic industries of India. The common shapes observed were dishes, bowls, vases, cooking pots and rimless *handis*. The other cultural material was represented by beads of different material, miscellaneous objects of iron, bone stylus[27] and cast copper coins from the upper level.[28] Significant finds are punch marked silver coins. In the valley, the early iron age was followed by the advent of NBP and the Indo-Greeks who followed them.[29] Various sites in India carrying such traits have also given us bone objects.[30] The structural activity is known from the rubble wall and the successive floor levels encountered here. Subsequently in the course of exploration, many more N.B.P. sites like Buna Gautmulla and Kanishpur in Baramulla were spotted.[31] This shows the wide distribution of the NBP culture in the valley.

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The much renowned NBP is the cultural material associated with the life of Gautama Buddha, his contemporary personalities and the Mauryas. It is known as the prince among the Indian potteries.[32] From its homeland in the central Ganga plain, it travelled through Buddhist missionaries to Taxila and Charsada—two famous cities of Gandhara in the north, to distant places in the south like Amaravati on the Krishna, to west as far as Somnath and in the east to Gaur and Panduva in East Bengal.[33] Its chronology is fixed at 700-200 B.C. in the excavated sites of Chirand and Sonpur in the north and south of Bihar respectively.[34] With its discovery in the valley, the debatable issue of association of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka—the first historical name referred to in the chronicle by Kalhana stands resolved.[35] It was uptil now argued that Kalhana's Ashoka is different from Ashoka of Magadha.[36] Geographically and culturally, the North West Frontier Province (ancient Gandhara) and Kashmir were included in the list of principalities reflected in Vedic hymns.[37] The Buddhist Jatakas (pre-Buddhist literature) refer to Taxila (ancient Takshashila)—one of the principal cities of Gandhara as the seat of learning where people from all different parts of the country used to come.[38] Some of the Jatakas also mention that caravans of merchants used to travel from eastern India to Kashmir and Gandhara for trade purposes.[39] In 6th century B.C., Gandhara is mentioned among the sixteen great kingdoms (Mahajanapadas).[40] The state of Gandhara roughly corresponded to modern Kashmir and Taxila.[41] Kashmir too contributed much to ancient Indian literature and the land was known as Sharda Mandala or the land of Sarasvati—the Goddess of Learning.[42] It is also a known fact that most of the Buddhist scholars or missionaries who preached the Buddhist faith in Central Asia and China, were from Kashmir. The epigraphical records reveal that Kharoshti was the common script of the two regions. It is against this background that King Ashoka used this very script in his edicts at Mansehra near Abbotabad and at Shahbazgarhi near Peshawar (ancient Pushkalavati), the modern Charsada.[43] Mansehra is a cross-section of roads where one road comes from Kashmir. In the past the land of Darads (the area extending from Chitral and Yasin across the Indus regions of Gilgit, Chilas and Bunji to Kishanganga river) was approached from the south from Taxila and Kashmir and from Badakhshan and Sinkiang from the north.[44] Semthan now has presented further archaeological data. Coins both of cast copper punch marked silver carry cultural unification between the two regions. Both the elements make their appearance with the NBP. In the middle of the first millennium B.C. the system of punch marked coinage accelerated the means of trade and exchange in North West Frontier Province (Gandhara) and Punjab[45] and now with Kashmir also. However, unidentified cast coins of copper were reported to be earlier than punch-marked ones.[46] Now that both types of the coins are found with the NBP at Semthan, it is clear that the coinage had gained wide currency in

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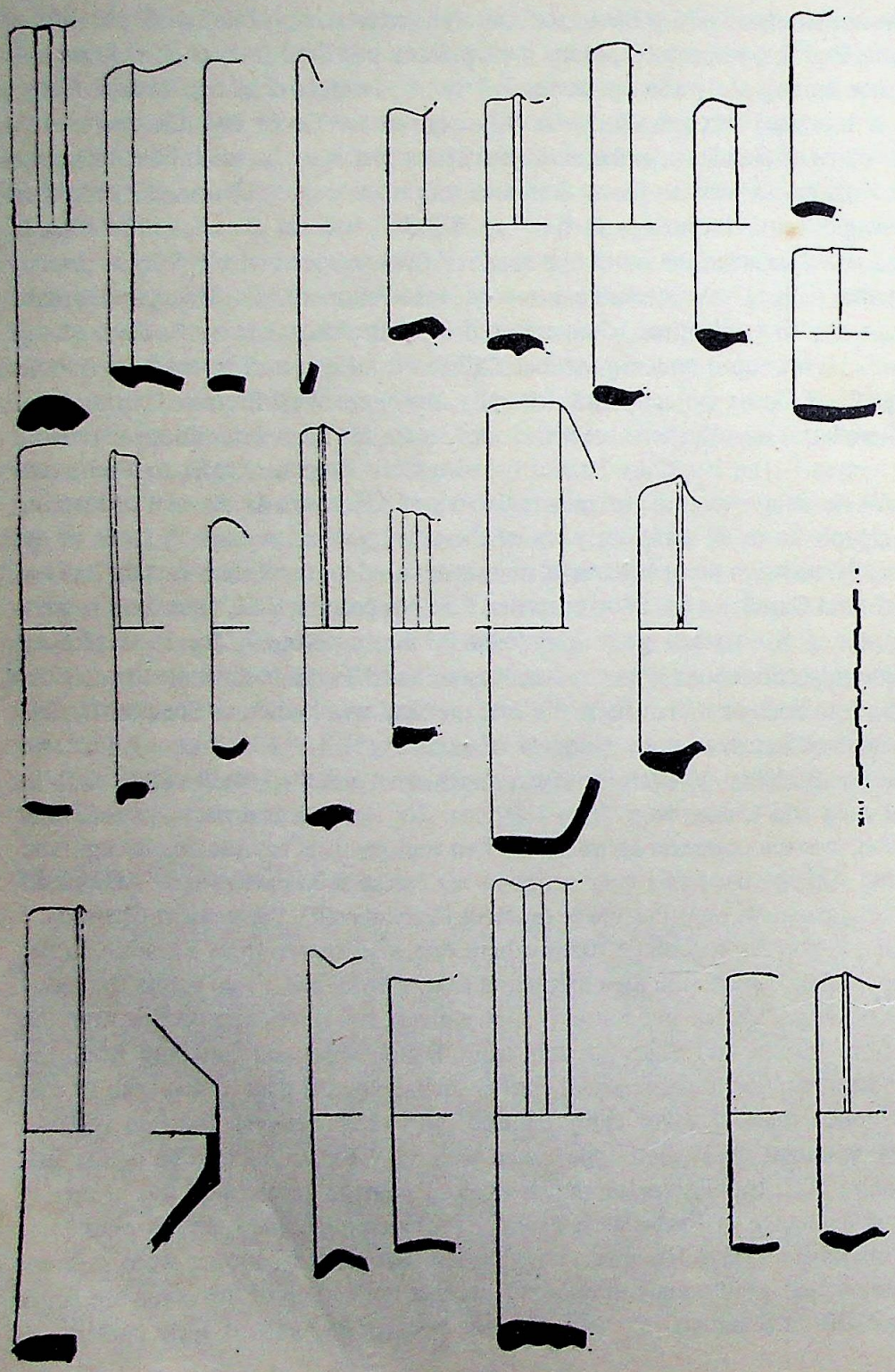

Fig. 19. Pottery from Semthan, Period II—NBP (after G.S. Gaur, A.S.I.).

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Kashmir valley during this period.

In Taxila at Bhirmound, such coins appear with N.B.P. in 500 B.C.[47] Accordingly the excavator of the Semthan site has rightly observed that in view of the close proximity of Kashmir with Taxila both geographically and culturally, the beginning of N.B.P. at Semthan could be around 500 B.C. at which time it was in use at the former.[48] Besides, the grey ware found here may differ with such finds elsewhere but its association with NBP carries its own importance. Incidentally, grey ware is reported at Manda in Jammu and also in Swat valley.[49]

Worship of Shiva as an embodiment of something supreme was already prevalent here and with the advent of grey ware people, it was enriched with the Vedic influence as well. In due course of time, there was the simultaneous development of the two systems—Vedanta and Shaivism and their consequent influence is visible even to this day in the performance of daily and occasional rites and rituals in the valley. Hymns from the Vedas and recitations from Tantras are simultaneously included in all types of religious performances.[50] Vedanta is Vedic and Aryan but Shaivism is non-Vedic or prehistoric. The subtlest form of Shiva is Shakti and both Shiva and Shakti are one.[51] Initiation into the Vedic cults precedes the Shaivite, Vaishnavite and Shakta cults. The funeral ceremony was performed through a strict adherence to the tenets of all these cults. With such a religious fervour prevalent in the valley, Buddhism found an intellectual climate for its footing. Whether it was introduced here by Madhyantika[52] or Majjhantika or by Buddha himself who had predicted the land of Kashmir as the best abode for contemplation and meditation.[53] The Nagas (who were people and not serpents) were the first to accept the teachings of Buddha (Gilgit Mss, Vol. I, pp. 5-6). It is now with the discovery of NBP in the valley, an archaeological reality that it thrived here even before Ashoka. It is evident from the rich deposit of over one metre thickness encountered here. It gives due weight to the account of Kalhana when he says that his predecessor—the illustrious and pious king Surendra built viharas. One such establishment was built at Saurasa which was distinguished by religious merit.[54] Earlier identified as Saurasa in Nagam Pargana,[55] it has now been identified as Soura in the outskirts of Srinagar city itself, in the wake of archaeological finds. Among other finds, one find is a terracotta plaque depicting Buddha seated cross legged with hands in Dharam Chakra Mudra. Besides terracotta finds, life size Buddhist images in stone were also found.[56] On these finds it is too early to confirm that the modern site of Soura is the probable site of Saurasa Vihara of Surendra as presumed,[57] in absence of definite clues to ceramic or structural evidences.

Kalhana depicts Ashoka as a propagator of religious tolerance. He not only replaced the stuccoed enclosure of Shiva's shrine by new stones but also built two Shiva temples at the ancient site of Bijibehara and named both after his own name

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as Ashokeshvara.[58] For Buddhists, he built numerous stupas and chaityas. Four of his stupas even existed at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit to the valley in the middle of 7th century.[59] These are said to have contained Buddha's relics.[60] Spade has yet to uncover any trace of these earlier structures. However, it is now known that the stuccoed constructions were replaced by stones which is further authenticated by the exposure of a rubble wall in the excavations at Semthan in Period II.[61] Such specimens, though isolated at the moment, are of the utmost significance as they indicate the original conception of building art in stone in the valley which in course of time developed into a glorious and magnificent constructions of both secular and religious establishments. The important contribution of king Ashoka was that he laid down the city of Shrinagari identified at the site of the present village of Pandrethan (Kalhana's Puranadhisthana) which remained the capital of ancient Kashmir till the end of 6th century A.D. when the capital was shifted farther down to the area known as 'Pravarasenapura' (modern Srinagar) which continues to be so even now. In view of the importance of the site, excavation of the area was taken up in the year 1913. The excavations revealed two Buddhist stupas and an open courtyard surrounded by a rubble-built wall. Only the stairs of one of the stupas on the northern and western sides could be seen. The other stupa, of a larger size, was built over a basement of about 22 mts square with four recesses in each corner. The drum of the stupa was decorated with Buddhist sculptures. Both the stupas were enclosed by compound walls. The open courtyard must have been a monastery.[62] The site has also yielded in addition to Brahmanical images, Buddhist images which include standing and seated Buddhist sculptures, a standing image of Avalokiteshvara and the sculpture representing the birth of Siddhartha, and other seated or standing sculptures.[63] A tooth-relic stupa was identified by Hieun Tsang here at the site. The account as such makes it clear that the remains stood there even before his visit. The structures so far excavated are dated by the excavator to be of 7th-8th century A.D. which, it appears, has been arrived at by him on examining the artistic niceties of the sculptures, though Gandharian type of drapery observed on these or on the Brahmanical images found at the site along with these sculptures and as such could be of an earlier date. Hieun Tsang himself stayed here in the Jayendra vihara but the excavator could not locate it. He was, therefore, of the view that none of the earlier structures has survived. The exposed structures also stand destroyed and the site could not be fully excavated as it came under the possession of the military authorities who changed the environment of the entire area.[64] The site remained a centre of religious activity for a long time. Only two of the mounds were excavated when it has been said that there are many of these covering an area of 5 kms from the site upto the village Pantchuk on Srinagar-Anantnag national highway, some were expected to conceal ancient remains.[65]

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Buddhism as such even in Ashokan days, was a well-integrated culture in the valley. It was a stronghold of the school of realist philosophy called 'Sarvastivada' (holding the doctrine that 'all exists'). It was with such a glorious cult of Buddhism prevalent in the valley of Kashmir that several monks from Kashmir were invited by emperor Ashoka to participate in the council held by him at Patliputra.[66] After the conclusion of the conference, a Buddhist savant, Majjhantika was sent to Kashmir and Gandhara—one of the nine geographical regions where such missions were sent to propagate the spirit of 'true Buddhism' which was deemed to have been purged of old dogmas and doctrines.[67] Such an assignment tallies perfectly with different sources like *Dipavamsha* (Ch. VIII), *Mahavamsha* (Ch. XII), *Samantapasadika*, *Shasanavamsha* etc. It goes without saying that after Ashoka's conversion, the Buddhist religion gained a certain prestige and a dignified status when there were many rival schools, faiths and creeds prevalent in the valley or in India in his time. Due to his royal patronage, Buddhism received a renewed vigour and there were monks who took the burden of preaching the doctrine of purified Buddhist creed as they put it. He introduced the emblem of the faith—the stupas—not only in the valley but in India and abroad. Though the plinth of these structures was of stone the superstructure must have been of timber which being a perishable material could not have stood the vagaries of weather. However, the sequence of events shows that the emperor who adopted a pro-Buddhist policy after his conversion, aroused opposition at the end of his reign and Kashmir was no exception. Still his reign marks a period of momentous importance when with the expansion of Buddhism almost all over India, he not only secured the unity of the country but also made possible its further expansion even in inaccessible regions and kingdoms outside the country, in which endeavour Kashmir played a key role.

The botanical research has recognized many more new species of plants, wood remains and weed seeds in this period.

Period III—Indo-Greeks (200 B.C. to 1st Century A.D.)

This period of 200 years constitutes, of course, a significant era so far as the cultural history of Gandhara and Kashmir region is concerned. The mighty empire of the Mauryas was dwindling. From 2nd century B.C. onwards, the entire region witnessed series of successive foreign invasions by Indo-Bactrian Greeks (190-90 B.C.), Shakas and Parthians (90 B.C. to A.D. 64) and then followed by great Kushanas. Buddhism had already penetrated into the southern region of Central Asia, as is evident by the discovery of Ashoka's inscriptions in Afghanistan also. Obviously Bactrians were fully acquainted with the teachings of Buddha. Following the death of Ashoka, disintegrating forces had arisen as a result of which various regions of the Mauryan empire became independent. Even in Kashmir, his

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son Jaluka became independent and vowed that he would worship Shiva.[68] This must have given a set back to the missionary activities launched by his father. He, however, did show a soft corner towards Buddhism when at a later stage he built at Kitsahom (Baramulla) a vihara also.[69]

Both Gandhara and Kashmir came under the sway of Bactrian Greeks. Their most ambitious ruler was Demetrius who after Alexander carried Greek arms into the interior of India after ascertaining first that the conditions in Gandhara—the corridor of India, were favourable for their stay and for onward mission. His kingdom included part of Kashmir also.[70] The Greeks named *Melecchas* by Kalhana are said to have been driven out from the land of their occupation in the valley by Ashoka's son, Jaluka.[71] Semthan even prior to excavations had yielded from the surface the coins of Indo-Bactrian rulers. One type of such coins was that of Menander, one of the greatest of their kings. He was also known as Milinda and held discussions with the learned Buddhist monk Nagasena somewhere in Kashmir.[72] Among the Indo-Scythian, Shaka or Parthian rulers, copper coins of Azis, Azilises and Abdagses were also found here. Apart from effective control of Indo-Greeks over the valley, the presence of coins reflects the flourishing trade existing between the Kashmiris and the Indo-Greeks in the first century B.C. Again the primary centre of diffusion was Gandhara where the next city of Taxila, i.e. Sirkap was founded by Indo-Greeks themselves. Here the lowest stratum of Indo-Greeks is followed by Parthians, Shakas and Kushanas down to Vasudeva. The cultural influence of Gandhara and Kashmir continued and took deep root in the soil which got crystallised in the years to come. The residential and other buildings were much more modest and despite a variety of plans, carried common features. The masonry observed at Sirkap in the structural phases was partly rubble and partly diaper.[73] This very style by and large was the typical mode of construction at the Kushana sites here in the valley.

Archaeologically some lurid light has been thrown on the presence of Indo-Greek rulers in the valley. Period III at Semthan has revealed a deposit of 40 cms consisting of several floor levels. The pottery is distinguished by a thin fabric with bright red, orange or light slip. The striking shapes are thalis (pans), vases with outturned and internally thickened rims, vessels with high necks and also goblets. Terracotta finds are rich in distribution and carry a variety of shapes. The limited area excavated at Semthan has yielded human heads with serene facial expressions. A clay seal depicts an Indo-Greek deity. It is presumed to be of Apollo. A significant find was the discovery of a pot sherd with the inscription consisting of five letters engraved below the rim portion externally. It reads as 'Dhamorai' or 'Dharmo (rajai)'. On Palaeographic grounds it is datable to 1st century B.C. which coincides with the stratigraphy of the find also. Perhaps it refers to king Menander

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who was not only a great conqueror but also a zealous Buddhist. He gave due protection to Buddhists persecuted by the Sungas. One of the two groups of such Kharoshti inscriptions found in the Baijur tribal territory about 20 miles to the west of the confluence of the Panjkora and Swat refers to the reign of Menander.[74] Being a pious king, he gave up his throne and joined the Sangha and became an 'arhat'. This is evident from the discussion he had with Nagasena who had a tremendous bearing on Buddhism in Kashmir in the 1st century B.C.[75] Accordingly, he has been referred to in the inscription as 'Lord of Dharma', Menander showed great predilection for Buddhist teaching. He built a vihara which was named after him as Milindavihara.[76]

Artistic niceties reached their climax during Indo-Greek rulers. An amazing art style combined with the Hellenic forms and characteristic features of the locals gave birth to a new school of art which later on came to be known as 'Gandhara Art'. This mixture of Buddhist religious elements and Greek forms penetrated into Central Asia and China. During the early years of Christian era, there were four powerful and prosperous empires: Rome in the west, China in the far east, great empire of Kushanas which was at its peak and covered Afghanistan and northern India, and the unavoidable Parthians as an intermediary force in the middle. All the empires had a consistent policy towards the trade as a result of which the famous silk route came into being.[77] The Indo-Greeks were proficient in fostering the trade and it is through these traders and merchants that the people of Mid-Asia came to know about India and her growing Buddhist cult. In this way, the Indo-Greeks were responsible for the advancement of Buddhism to Central Asia and China, by bringing with them artistic and Indo-Hellenistic Buddha images or Buddhist symbols wrought in Gandhara or Kashmir.[78] The broad-based Hellenistic tradition had a lasting effect in the development of monumental wealth of Kashmir in the mediaeval period. The Buddhist art of Gandhara, however, got a new impetus and wide circulation under Kushanas more so under its powerful and great king Kanishka.

Period IV—Kushanas, Kidar Kushanas and Hunas (1st Century to 5th Century A.D.)

This period at Semthan is distinguished by 4 m thick deposit which has presented a reliable data regarding the different phases encountered here during the course of excavation. The pottery evidence is strikingly significant. It ranges in fabric from fine to coarse red. The ingredients are profusely used when it is the case of medium or coarse variety. In the earlier phase, it has witnessed numerous ceramic parallels of the preceding period. The important shapes are bowls, long necked vases, lid-cum-dish internally hollow and out-turned rims, jars of dull red

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ware with outcurved horizontally splayed out rims with a deep profile, pots with spherical body etc. The decorations on some of the sherds are simple and include applique, incised and stamped designs. Among the important antiquities are terracotta, semi-precious stone, bone and shell beads, terracotta balls, clay sealings with Brahmi and Kharoshti scripts, copper and silver coins of Kushana rulers and a number of terracotta figures usually prepared out of a single mould. A noteworthy terracotta figure is of a headless standing figure of a Bodhisattva wearing a sleeved tunic reaching to the knees having intermittent delineated folds usually running parallel to one another. Its right hand is probably raised in *abayamudra*. This goes in conformity with many of the Gandhara sculptures of the period. Another male head with prominent moustaches indicates close similarity with Gandhara prototypes.

Interesting building activity is known by the exposure of mud bricks, rubble and diaper pebble walls with associated floor levels. It may be mentioned here that such mud brick structures were noticed in excavations of Kushana sites in Ganga and Sutlej basins. Brick tiles with faint motifs of a cross within a circle do point to the beginning of highly rich decorative tiles commonly found in Kushana sites in the valley.[79]

In the next phase, change both in structural or ceramic sides is distinct. It is marked by post-Kushana period. The structures are marked by rubble stones without any intervening cementing material. The floors are even paved with small sized rubble stones. The pottery also presents new types often treated with bright red slip. The main shapes are bowls with tapering sides and footed bases, variety of goblets, water vessels and basins with out-turned, internally thickened and sharpened rims. Terracotta finds include both human and animal figures. These undoubtedly portray Gupta influence. The top most deposit of this period yielded several coins of Huna rulers.[80] Thus there is a chronological sequence of numismatic, epigraphical, ceramic or structural evidences which coupled with the new finds from exploration coincides to a great extent with the historical data available on the cultural cross-currents during Kushana and later Kushana periods. Still there is no such site which could provide a systematic cultural pattern though individually uniformity is forthcoming from different zones widely separated from each other.

Recently the archaeological field work has brought to light, probably for the first time, a hoard of copper coins of Kajula Kara Kadaphises which fall before the Kanishka group of coins. These are round in shape, depict a humped bull on one side and a Bactrian camel on the other side and have come from the ancient site of Tarakpur overlooking the famous Wular lake on Sopore-Bandipore link road.[81] This route along with the shore of the lake has played a vital role in maintaining the cultural and trade links between Kashmir and Darad territory and further to Central

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Asia. Leaving Srinagar, the route passes through Bandipore, Gurais, Astor Bhunji, Gilgit, Chitral and Yasin valleys in the Darad country and then further to Central Asia and China. Chinese travellers, Fa-hein (399 A.D.), Chemong (400 A.D.), Fa-yong (420 A.D.), Song-yun (518 A.D.) and Ou-Kong (759 A.D.)[82] came to Kashmir through this route. Kajula Kadaphises established himself as the sole monarch of Yue-chi tribe to which Kushanas belonged.

The Kushana empire reached the pinnacle of its glory under the patronage of his successor—Kanishka (A.D. 123-153).[83] He focused his attention on Kashmir since he believed that Buddhism was practised in its pristine purity here. Ashoka had been the patron of Sarvastivadin monks of Kashmir on whom he bestowed lavish gifts,[84] and Kanishka also followed his footsteps. He favoured this school of thought and is said to have chosen this land for convening fourth Buddhist conference in which the majority of the participants were Sarvastivadins. The object of the council was to prepare commentaries on the canons[85] since he was upset with the growing controversies and conflicting interpretations of Buddha's words. The commentaries called *Vibhashas* were written in Sanskrit language. The treatises written on copper plates had been enclosed in stone-boxes and deposited in a stupa made especially for the purpose.[86] The location of the site is still a debatable issue. While Hiuen Tsang has stated that the council was held in Kashmir, he had not given the exact location but on the other hand Taranath had mentioned 'Kundalwan' as the place where this great council was held. Many archaeologists of the world have been searching the place but of no avail. In the process some have identified it with Kanzalwan or Kuntiluen—the hilly slopes from Harwan to Gupkar in Srinagar. Some are of the opinion that the village Kond (Kulgam) is the actual site. Some have claimed that Ushkur (ancient Huskapura or Huviskapura) is the possible site. Again some believe that the possible site is Ahan near Sumbal or Kanelwan in Bijibehara or a village called Budhmul, Baramulla. Dr. Token Sumi, Professor of Linguistics, Nagoya University in Japan has suggested that ethnological studies about the Yakshas in Kashmir may lead the archaeologists towards the right direction.[87] Some of the sites hinted at so far, have no doubt, revealed Buddhist relics but no copper plates. Many new Buddhist sites have been located but the spade has yet to unearth the literary labours that were collated under the benign rule of Kanishka. He became a patron of Gandhara art. In his period, the sculptors and painters became more active. This resulted in the awareness of Buddhism than any other faith and obtained world-wide recognition. Literacy was encouraged by the teaching and learning of scriptures, art by making of images for ritual worship, architecture by building monasteries, viharas and stupas. Buddhism thus secured the imperial patronage of Ashoka, received marked favour from Menander and its transformation into world religion took place in the reign of Kanishka. Still, the

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rival cult of Shiva continued to receive their patronage also.[88] In one of Kanishka's coins, found here, a four-armed standing Shiva carrying drum, gourd, goat and also a trident in his hands[89] is displayed. He decorated his coins some of which were golden with the name of Boddo or Buddha.[90] He was a patron of learning since he patronized highly renowned poets and philosophers like Ashvaghosha, Vasumitra, Vasuvandhu, Dharmatrata, Sanghabhadra, Jintrata and others.[91]

Nagarjuna said to be his contemporary was a great Buddhist scholar who lived along with others at the seat of Buddhist learning known as 'Shadarhadvana' (Grove of six saints), i.e. modern Harwan.[92] He is also credited with the building of the city which he named after him and was called Kaneshkapura,[93] modern Kanespur, near Baramulla on Srinagar-Baramulla national highway. Its height, the magnitude of the area covered, and the material culture recovered from here definitely place it as a centre of great activity even from pre-Kushana days.[94] Kalhana has mentioned two other rulers Huviska and Juska along with Kanishka.[95] The coins of Huviska instead of Shiva on one of its sides depict Sun with the halo of rays.[96] Both the kings also built two cities which like Kanishka they named after them. Huviska built Huviskapura, modern Ushkur. Hiuen Tsang named it *Hu-se-kia-lo* where on his entry in the valley, he stayed on his way to Srinagar after coming through the ancient gate of Varahmulla (Baramulla).[97] The exposed stupa along with the surrounding wall was so far attributed to Lalitaditya (725-760)[98] but scientific clearance undertaken in recent years brought to light an earlier plinth of this stupa.[99] Lalitaditya built his stupa over an older structure ascribed to Kushana times.[100] This, also lends due confirmation to an earlier statement that it was superimposed by another structure by Lalitaditya in mid-eighth century and that the style of both the constructions closely correspond with that of the contemporary stupas of Gandhara.[101] However, the slate stones of the original plinth stand quite distinct from the heavy stone blocks used at a later date. Towards the northern side of the enclosure wall of the stupa, a considerable number of terracotta heads represented by Buddha, Bodhi sattva, monks, both female and male, lay-devotees young and old, some with serene and some with deranged outlooks, have been found. These charming sculptures represent excellent example of modelling[102] and as such are the earliest examples of Kashmir sculptural art.[103] Terracotta tiles some of which are moulded have also been found in the vicinity. The texture and the dimensions of these tiles tally with similar finds from other sites but the motifs mainly consisting of petals lack maturity and fine set-up which show the process of evolution of the monastic art in the valley during the early centuries of Christian era. All this points to an earlier date for the structures and finds. Against this ancient city, Juska's Juskapur, i.e. modern Zakur about 3 kms above the famous site of Hazaratbal is at the moment devoid of any such remains worth the name as it has witnessed the devel-

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opment of both government and residential colonies and raising of modern religious edifices. Still in the area about half a km away from the present complex of Bhaba Atomic Research Centre, some isolated patches of an old mound are still discernible. Probing of these will throw additional light on the ancient site if and when these are undertaken. There are, however, considerable number of stone pillars and other architectural members which speak that the town was an important locality in ancient days.[104]

Vasudeva was the last ruler of Kushanas. His coins show the king in his usual Kushana dress (peaked helmet, heavy padded boots, long trousers and defensive dress) on the obverse and offering being made on the altar of the goddess on the reverse. Generally all the Kushana coins carry Greek legend. Some coins from the coin-cabinet of S.P.S. Museum at Srinagar have been identified to be of gold coins of Kanishka, Huviska and Vasudeva. Quite recently a hoard of Kanishka's coins has been collected from a village maidan Chogul in Handwara Tehsil, district Kupwara.

The fall of Kushana, empire in the north-west was hastened by the rise of the Sassanian dynasty of Persia and also because of the ruthless raids of Hunas in the north by the end of the 4th century A.D. Till the advent of Hunas in the valley by the end of 5th century A.D., the valley was ruled by Kidara-Kushanas who were the weak heirs of imperial Kushans. This is supported by the numismatic evidence when the gold coins of Kidaras like the Kushana kings depict the king standing on the obverse and the goddess seated on the reverse with the word Kidara written in late Gupta Brahmi characters. The use of such type of coins till late medieval period was adopted in the valley.[105] Archaeological pursuits at Semthan also point to the change observed in the phase II of the Period IV.

The Kushana dynasty beginning with the ruler Kadaphises in the first century and under the patronage of the great king Kanishka followed to some extent by his followers brought about stability in economy, advancement in trade and a remarkable growth in the prosperity of the people of the valley. The cultural movement was profound and of a moving order. It also marked a tremendous advancement in art and architecture. There are numerous sites which give ample proof of relatively extensive monastic establishments which thrived in the secluded mountainous retreats of the valley.

In the earlier phase falls the site of considerable importance at Zehanpur opposite to Ghantamul, 10 kms below Baramulla. The place is known by the name of Jaimpur being an *apabhramsha* of Jamadagnipura. It is also traditionally connected with the carrying of sacred cow-giver of desired objects, i.e *Kamadhenu* whose foot-print was pointed out on a rock near the site. However, among other things of interest, the site has pretty large mounds—three in number, which possibly contain

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the remains of stupas.[106] The then Director General of Archaeology in India was also very much struck with the attractiveness of the site and hoped that its excavation might lead to interesting discoveries.[107] The preliminary excavation conducted here during the year 1925-26 did not yield any substantial results. Even the nature of the structures also could not be ascertained. However, the entire area appears to have been of utmost significance during later days as well. Copper coins from Ghantamul include issues of the Huna Chief and the Kashmiri rulers Queen Didda (958-80) and Harsha (1089-1101).[108] The place must have been a centre of great interest since it was situated on the ancient route coming from the North West Frontier Province (Gandhara) which has played an important role in the cultural life of the people in the valley.

There has been a widening of activity in the field of archaeology in the valley which has led to impressive discoveries besides the known ones. A significant drive has, however, been made in identifying the Buddhist sites whose material culture is of considerable merit more so in the light of the findings and observations made at Semthan excavation under the strata here.

Near the famous summer resort of Pahalgam and surrounded by mountains full of green forests, an ancient Buddhist site has been discovered at a place known as Hoi-Nar, Lidroo. Three domed shaped structures represent the remains of stupas which show that they formed part of the structural accompaniments in baked bricks indicating an extensive Buddhist settlement of an earlier period. The upper layer of one of the remains carried burnt earth which according to the discoverer[109] points to the burning of the edifice during ancient times. Though none of the remains have been excavated but probably from the surface or from the exposure of the pavement around these stupas, some moulded terracotta tiles have been recovered. The tiles carry motifs and forms of expression which are of far reaching implication so far as the motifs on such tiles of Harwan are concerned. The human figures, animal and other motifs are crude, devoid of lustre and skill which takes the site earlier than the known and famous site of Harwan. Besides, the symbolic representation of Buddhist religion in the form of spoked wheel of Law or the Chakra, the other motifs, being unique in their character, are the human beings in their usual Kushana dress and in their jovial mood with hands raised up in token of their happiness over the hunt which includes the running deer after it has been struck by the former. The other representation is of winged lions in combat. The currents of events make an entirely fresh beginning in the terracotta art though its origin too has been assigned to Western and Central Asian artistic conception.[110] Further up from here in the thickly wooded forest compartment of Mamal (anc. Mamaleshvara) overlooking the river Liddar, similar Buddhist ruins have been found. The site is at a distance of 4 kms from the village of Mamal itself. Terracotta tiles with animal motifs and

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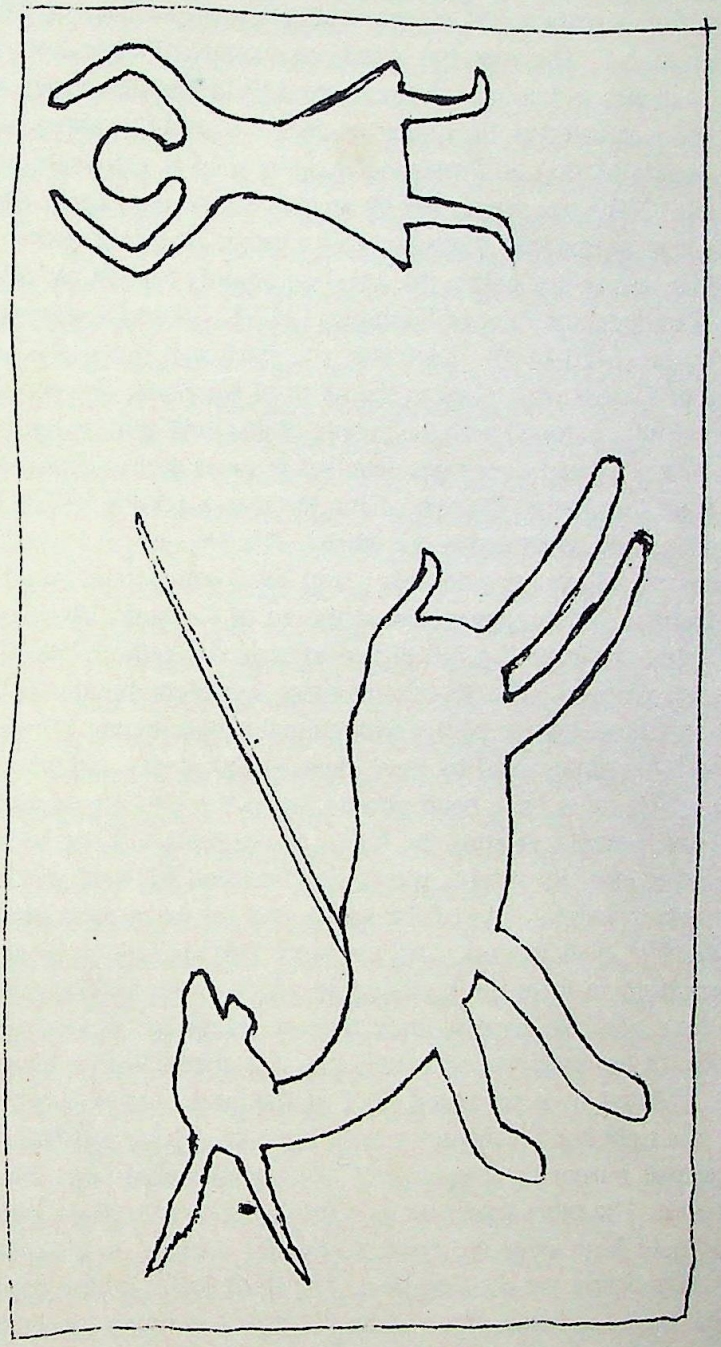

Fig. 20. Hoinar hunting scene, early historical.

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geometrical designs were recovered which stylistically are akin to Hoi-nar, Lidroo. These finds were found scattered at places locally known as Doni-pather, Yaren Yender and Guder-nakh.[111] The zone has also been a centre of stone ware industry. Numerous chips of dishes and bowls were recovered.[112] In the same range, the other site recently located is situated on the higher reaches at Darad Kot above the village Huthmura (anc. Shakta Matha) on Srinagar-Pahalgam road at a distance of 64 kms from Srinagar itself.[113] The site proper lies on an elevated plateau about 3 kms from the village itself. It is approached through a fair weather road laid over a series of low and high uddar and is just below the canal commonly known as 'Shaha Kul' dug out by Raja Ramdeva, the ruler of Kashmir (1252-1273) and it was repaired by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470). 'Dard Kot' the place as it is called is connected with the territory of Darads which lies to the north of Kashmir. The people of this region have been closely in touch with the people of this land since early times.

The ancient site is spread over three levelled terraces and is disturbed by the stream coming from the above. On one of the terraces a portion of the land was cleaned and thereby a tile pavement was exposed. The tiles are all carved and bear figurative decorations which are interesting and fascinating in as much as they possess certain features which appear new in the art of Kashmir. The pavement is laid out in concentric circle with a full blown lotus in the centre. The tiles are of various shapes and patterns. The motifs on these represent human beings with normal facial appearances, human beings with animal heads, human beings carrying tails, animals and birds represented by lions, deer, swans, cocks and other items of fauna and flora which must have been present when the entire environment was heavily wooded and watered. Among the fruits, grapes seem to have been particularly grown in abundance. Its surplus growth is cherished by water birds as well. The grapes were the principal fruit of the valley and has been mentioned by Bilhana[114] and Kalhana[115] in their works. All the more striking feature is shown on a tile which is trapezium in form. Its bottom side which is the longest measures 42 cms. On it in three separate panels, three human beings are shown standing in different attitudes. In the extreme left panel, a man is shown with a broad smiling face, with hairs twisted in a projected knot at the back and wearing a typical Kushana dress. His right hand rests on the right hip and with his left hand, he holds a club or an incense burner or some object of an amusement since his eyes are curiously fixed on it. The other figure on its right is in a dancing pose with both the arms and hands held high over the head. Curiously enough, it is shown with a pointed tail raised befitting the dancing pose. The third figure on the extreme right is animal headed, the head being of a Varaha. Its right hand rests on the right knee which is raised and the left hand is behind the body. The tail is here shown twisted with the body itself. Almost all the tiles carry Kharoshti numerals. The style,

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composition and figurative representation both at Hoinar-Lidroo and here represent rough product of the socio-economic set-up of the people at a particular given time. The entire complex is demarcated with the pebble wall which in turn is enclosed by a rubble wall. The pebble wall is noticed in other isolated patches also. However, the combination of pebble or diaper pebble wall along with the rubble structure is a unique phenomenon since both these systems of construction are shown in different sequential situations at the known Buddhist establishment at Harwan, District Srinagar.[116] Again for the projection of archaic art when animal or demonic human forms were freely used in the west, surviving examples are found in the excavations at Takht-i-Bahi, the centre of the ancient territory of Gandhara in the level datable to early Christian era. Here was found in stone an interesting marine monster with the body and a head of a man, the forelegs and feet of a bull and with the wings and a long serpentine tail.[117] This shows the artistic tradition found on the tiles at Darad Kot though in a decadent Hellenistic style has its source in Gandhara.

Manufacturing of terracotta tiles in the valley has experienced stages of evolution before one notices the enriched collection of these finds at Harwan. The terracotta tiles found at Kralachak in District Anantnag contain decorations of a plant with bunches of grapes and flying birds below, a flower plant rising from a rounded vase with a full blossomed flower flanked by two petal leaves, and some acanthus like leaves. All the motifs are shown with the Kharoshti numerals.[118] Slightly dignified motifs are found on the terracotta tiles found at Ahan near Sumbal, district Baramulla. In one of the tiles a standing human figure holding a spear with Kharoshti numerals is depicted.[119] Similar decorative and structural evidences have come from village Takiya Balla, 33 kms from Srinagar in Tral Tehsil, District Pulwama. The area falls on the southern side of the hilly region of Harwan ruins. Probing a section of the lowest terrace here situated in close proximity to Chandradhara stream yielded purely pebble wall, the facing of which goes with the early phase of building activity in an impressive and widely-spread monastic establishment at Harwan. The pottery demarcated by thin to medium fabric is predominantly red ware with shapes of bowls, dishes, basins and small but wide-mouthed cups, knobbed lids etc. Stray sherds in grey ware and black slipped ware were also encountered. The terracotta tiles carry petal motifs. An interesting discovery was that of an inscription in Brahmi characters of 4th century A.D. It is engraved on a huge block of rock located on the right bank of Chandradhara stream.[120] Only a letter or two are discernible which do not make any sense. However, an attempt to record it in Brahmi script is an outstanding event. Locally the place is called with the name of 'Hari Chandra Raja' or traditionally after king Harishchandra with which the ruins of Harwan on its north are also known. This, as such bears some weight on the similar set of establishment on this side of the hill. In fact, it is more desirable

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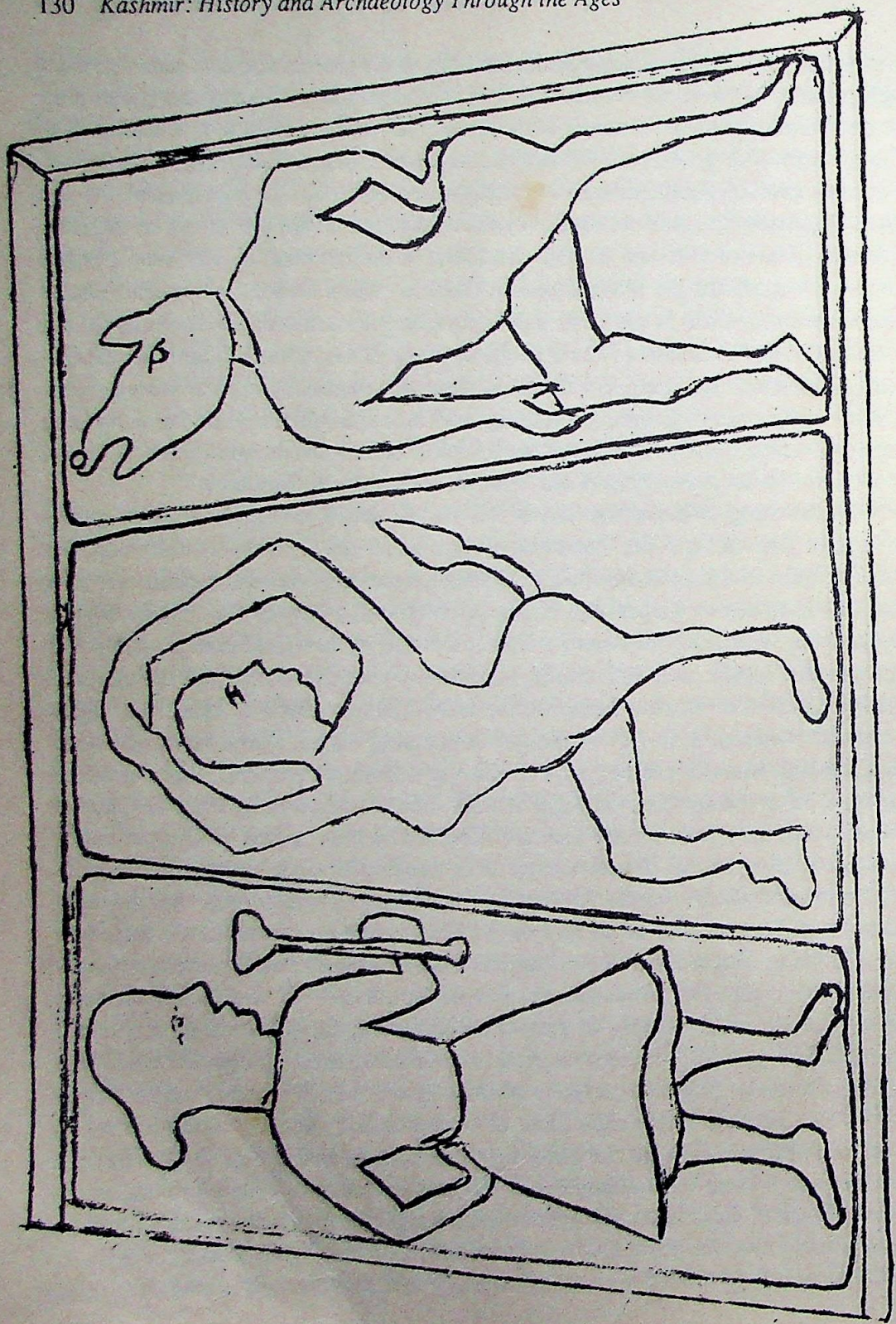

Fig. 21. Representation of human beings from Huthmura, Kashmir.

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to believe that the ruins on Takiya Balla side are only the extension of the Harwan establishment being one of the prosperous centres symbolising the Buddhist creed. The partial excavations at Harwan have made principal contribution in the form of exposure of art, architecture and various stages of building manifestations.

Situated on the slopes of the high ground overlooking the transparent waters of Dal lake and the fertile valley down below with the snow peaked mountain range in the distance, the ruins of Harwan lie at a distance of 15 kms north-east of Srinagar-Dachigam Wildlife Sanctuary link road. Founded under the Kushanas, the site was active for a considerable length of time thereafter.

Harwan identified as *Shadarhadvana* or the forest of six saints was partially excavated in the first quarter of the 20th century and has yielded important evidence of constructional techniques, artistic remains and other cultural material which are undoubtedly of Buddhist attribution. Its importance is further highlighted as a Buddhist centre since it is generally believed that Kanishka held the fourth Buddhist council here during second century A.D.[121]

Three different phases of building activity have been noticed. These belong to different ages and are built in three different styles demonstrated by the pebble, the diaper-pebble and the diaper-rubble. The earliest and first phase was purely of pebble style. These pebbles each of which is 1″ to 2″ in diameter are easily available in the nearby streams. These were neatly embedded on the mud wall. It was followed in A.D. 300 by the method of reinforcing the wall of pebbles by the insertion of large and irregular stones at intervals. On the basis of similar system of construction found in many buildings at Taxila, it has been designated as 'diaper-pebble'.[122] The third phase of 'diaper-rubble' consisted of large and small rubble stones arranged in a diaper pattern. The diaper masonry developed under Kushanas.[123] The structures of the pebble style were discovered on a lower level than the structures of other two types of masonry. However, these were found in close proximity to each other. An isolated patch of a monastery in pure pebble style stood exposed in the middle terrace. In diaper-pebble style was exposed a large structure occupying a significant position on the highest terrace which included an Apsidal temple preceded by an oblong hall. It is similar to that of apsidal structure of Sirkap[124] or that of the Chaitya-hall cave at Kondivte.[125] It is apsidal on the exterior and internally it consists of circular sanctum. Earlier it was reported that it had no circumambulatory passage but in the recent probing, the traces of this passage were also found. No relic as such was found in the ante-chamber in its front. However, some more remains of the kind were found in the area higher above these exposed remains. In this style is also a better exposed structure named as 'Prayer hall', on the lowest terrace. It is rectangular in plan with an opening to its north.

In the preliminary excavations in recent years, new facets of the once munifi-

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cent structures came to the surface. The present wall of the so named prayer hall, it was observed, goes down by a metre or so on the western and northern sides from the present level of the ground. Besides, series of cells built in diaper pebble style were exposed. One of the cells excavated inside the structure on the north-western corner of the so called prayer hall measures 2.30 mts × 1.20 mts. Such cells were found running both on the northern and southern sides without any break for the entrance.[126] The excavations also disclosed that one of the walls on the southern side of a cell was going under the diaper rubble enclosure of the triple based stupa built of the same masonry work. Both are separated by a burnt layer which indicates that the earlier structures built in diaper pebble masonry were destroyed by fire by Hunas (5th-6th century A.D.) who were anti-Buddhists and were responsible for the destruction of Buddhist establishments in northern region which included Kashmir also.[127] The cells which continue both inside and outside of the prayer hall structure without any break lead to the conclusion that there existed no entrance on the northern side as is observed in the present day standing structure. Obviously, it indicated that the structure formed a part and parcel of the structure to its west prior to the erection of diaper rubble structure of triple based stupa or its enclosure wall.[128] Further probing will expose the still unknown extension of cellular complex, the original plan of the structure besides the correct position of the stratigraphy. At the moment, it is now clear that the rough method of building activity represented by diaper rubble method is later than the diaper pebble structure, possibly built after the havoc caused by Hunas. This is also confirmed by the presence of a copper coin of Tormana, the Huna chief over the ruins of the destroyed material or as the excavator puts it 'below the foundation of the triple based stupa'[129] and as such is posterior to Tormana.[130] Along with this style of construction is the set of rooms separated by a corridor. It is laid out at the extreme end of the terrace and faces the stupa itself. These arrangements of buildings varying from mud, pebble combined with ashlar to rubble walls are like a regional variant of the type of diaper masonry universally employed in Gandhara.[131]

A number of antiquities found here are broken terracotta bodily limbs of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, their curls besides isolated plaques representing the replica of stupas prevalent in the valley. The stupa displayed on the plaque carries three tiered base with three flight of steps in line one over the other. A cylindrical dome rises up from the uppermost basement which in turn crowns a long series of umbrellas diminishing gradually from the bottom to the top. The entire complex is then surmounted by the chhatravali (umbrellas) with a pointed finial. At the bottom of the plaque is recorded the Buddhist creed in Brahmi characters of the 4th century A.D.[132] Obviously the plaque represents the style of stupa prior to the erection of triple based stupa. There may be such representations which may go earlier as well.

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However, the most valuable and striking finds are the terracotta tiles each of which was moulded with variety of motifs presenting an effective and colourful picture of human beings, mythical and real representation of animals, floral and other abstract designs which distinguishes them as unique in Indian art. These embellish the courtyard of the apsidal temple and the ante-chamber so as to serve the purpose of circumambulatory passage to go round these shrines.

The human figures shown on the tiles are men and women seated in pairs or more on the balcony, water carriers, horse riders, dancing girls, musicians, man fighting with the dragon for the wheel of law, emaciated monks etc. The rich attire of men and women, their exquisitely carved ornaments of ear-rings and beaded necklaces, pointed Tartar caps, combing of hairs, sunken eyes, low receding foreheads, heavy jaws resemble racial types from Kashgar and Yarkand and from many other sources. Men and women on the balcony are generally wife and husband or lovers. The woman has a distinct style of hair dress and wears a beaded necklace while the man is having a well built body and carries bonded strands of hairs at the back of his head. He generally holds a lotus stalk in his hand or sometimes holds a cup of wine and thus enjoys while conversing with his counterpart. A feature of considerable interest is marked by a lively motif of water carrier. His manual labour in bringing the water from the streams characterises the reverence for the maintenance and upkeep of monastery or the monastic establishment. He wears only a loin cloth and carries two vases—one held by his right hand stretched downwards and the other is held by his left hand stretched over his head while the vase rests on his right shoulder. Along with it, though in a separate panel, is shown a female figure carrying a flower vase or the incense burner on her upraised hand. She supports her skirt with her right hand. These members of the society portray a planned system of division of labour and stand at variance with the luxurious way of life of the couple depicted at the balcony. Further an impressive example of recreation is characterised by portraying a fascintaing figure of a dancing girl or woman. She wears large ear-rings, loose robes and tight trousers. The long scarf hanging from her head is held by her hands and presents an emotional countenance which is but a prerequisite for a skilled dancer. The figure is particularly shown in an ornamental panel. The musicians are also shown full of vigour and movement playing enchanting notes. Martial spirit is known from the scene of combat with the dragon-like creature standing on hind legs similar to an early relief from Sanchi stupa number two,[133] or from the depiction of a soldier in armour hunting deer with his bow and arrow. The self-torture scene of the monks who are lean, nude and reduced to skeleton are shown with their bent backs, legs tucked up, hands placed on the knees, and with chins resting on the hands. This depicts a realistic picture of starvation, or hunger strike against the anti-Buddhist practices of the upper classes of the

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society shown on the balcony. During late Parthian or early Kushana times, the monks were accustomed to beg and eat their food in the streets. They had to be scorched, befrozen in fearsome woods, naked and without fire.[134] Asceticism was prevalent in all the Indian religious systems. Emaciated type of motifs also denotes a particular type of episode from the life of Buddha when undergoing such physical exercises in his search for truth, no fruitful results were obtained by him and accordingly he advised his followers not to resort to such practices.[135] Such depiction could, therefore, serve as a warning to the people not to take such a course. Amorous scenes, wine drinking, dancing, musical and ascetic representations at Harwan raised doubts about its association with Buddhism.[136]

The ornamental toilet-trays unearthed in the Sirkap city at Taxila portray a pair of lovers in an erotic scene, figures reclining on a couch with attendant females, drinking and dancing scenes, male and female holding drinking cups, winged stags, lions, rider and geometric or floral designs. Most of these subjects and the workmanship point out to Hellenistic culture from the West where numerous such instances have been found especially in Egypt.[137] Even if this art thrived under Parthians in North West India, it witnessed its maturity under the Kushanas who threw them out in 64 A.D. Erotic themes received more so many touches in Kushana period. Depiction of amorous themes was adopted by the monks of Hinayana sect who had encouraged such motifs as a form of decoration in religious art.[138] In Kushana times (1st-3rd century A.D.) such sculptures were considered as auspicious motifs and were carved on the entrances of the Buddhist monuments.[139]

The excavations at Sanghol, Tehsil Samrala in District Ludhiana in Punjab have now revealed a fresh bearing on such characteristic subjects. The site was the most prosperous city in Kushana times, and like Harwan has experienced severe destruction by the vigorous attacks of the Hunas in the 5th century A.D. The discovery of Kushana sculptures carved on red mottled sand stone have been obtained for the first time in large numbers carrying high artistic attraction belonging to Mathura School (1st-2nd century A.D.) but now outside the Mathura belt. These represent series of bacchanalian scenes. Wine drinking scenes were popular. Voluptuous figures, intoxicated ladies, couple on the balcony with railings of plain upright and cross bars, dancers clad in transparent garments with thin parallel folds and adorned with heavy ornaments, human figures in crouching forms and musicians in graceful postures are the representative types. Again damsels are depicted in their nudity. The backs of the sculptured slab stones are invariably decorated with medallions.[140] The drinking scenes which enjoyed popularity also come from Hadda in southern Afghanistan. Instead of wine cup, lotus stalk was also held by the lover in order to give the Buddhist establishment at Harwan a holier air.

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Evidences confirm that Harwan is a Buddhist site. Animal representation at Harwan is both mythical and real.[141] This includes galloping horse, long horned deer, cows suckling their young, domestic cocks with foliated tails in roundels or in the centre of floral patterns, running or flying geese holding lotus stalks in their beaks, cocks and rams fighting, makara type of fanciful animals, lions and fish etc. The decorative elements consist of frets, wavy lines, fish borne patterns, conventional flowers, leaves, acquatic plants, lotus leaves, rosettes, roundels, dots, geometrical patterns, crescent shaped objects, and simple wavy lines or hatching. In short these motifs are suggestive of half a dozen alien civilizations of the ancient world[142] and indicate memorable impact of diverse historical culture.

These tiles were stamped with Kharoshti numerals so as to avoid confusion in their composition. This script ceased to be in vogue in the north-west in 5th century A.D. and a date sometime before it is attributed to these tiles. It is also apparent that the script was still used by Kidara Kushanas—a branch of the main family, who controlled the region. After the fall of the great Kushanas, even the local rulers happened to be of Kushana affiliation.[143] The foliate motifs in the band of geese as depicted on the tiles closely resemble the Gupta examples from north and north-central India, on the basis of which again a period of fourth century A.D. is assigned to these.[144] On the other hand the excavator maintains that the tiles might have been borrowed from an earlier structure other than their find-spot of diaper pebble and have been dated as of 300 A.D.[145] Obviously the tiles then have come from the 'Pebble' buildings which definitely are of an earlier date. Thermoluminescence has also revealed the date falling between second and sixth century A.D.[146] The latest probing revealing the existence of monastic cells confirms this assessment.[147] On stylistic grounds coupled with other evidences, the site gained its cultural momentum at different stages of its development. However, even with such contradictory views regarding the site of its date, there are ample evidences of its association with the Buddhist site.[148]

After the fall of Kushana empire and the beginning of Gupta era, there was political instability throughout north India. During this period two powers, Nagas and Vakatakas had their sway. The two Naga princes known as Nava Naga and Virasena Naga were successful in eliminating the Kushanas and Shakas from the northern India. This state of uncertainty and turmoil had its effect in the valley which however, came to surface with the advent of Huna chief, Mihirkula in the second quarter of 6th century A.D. He was cruel, ruthless and anti-Buddhist. Hunas in general were responsible for the wholesale destruction of Buddhist monasteries.[149] On the other hand, Mihirkula was a devotee of Shiva. After his death, there was significant revival of Hindu religion. At the same time, the Buddhist tradition too was carried on as is evident by the findings at Semthan and also by the

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structural evidences (rubble structures) at Harwan.

Magical belief and practices attributed to supernatural powers of certain mythical beings or of legendary fame were developed and this gave rise to Tantric cult in about 5th century A.D. Tantrism played a momentous part when by a natural process of absorption it was incorporated into Hinduism and Buddhism. In course of time, Tantrism was a religious system and a period between 7th to 12th century can be called the peak period of Tantric works and cults of both Hindus and Buddhists.[150] A violent urge for obtrude sensuousness had become the characteristic feature of Kushana art represented in Buddhist establishments at Gandhara, Mathura or Harwan. Depiction of nudity, eroticism, dancing and music at these sites is a clear proof of systematic decaying trend of the high doctrines of the great Master (Buddha). The widespread popularity of the system brought about corruption among Buddhists. Superstitious legends were woven some of which were based on the stories of Buddha's previous births or Jatakas. Nagas were represented in human forms with snake hoods rising above the heads. They were propitiated by the Buddhists as lords of treasures, capable of granting boons and destroying the enemies of the worshipper. Buddhism under Kushanas thrived because of its progressive ideals, toleration and broadmindedness.[151] A girdle of Nagas adorns the neck of Shiva also. The Buddhists recognised *Janguli* as the serpent goddess. Her head dress, ear-rings and waist-band were decorated with serpents. She could cure snake-bites. The secret of her worship is said to have been imparted by Lord Buddha himself to Ananda.[152] Accordingly this gave birth to magical practices. This system brought corruption among the Buddhists. Instead of sincere and pious priests, magic-practising priests were respected. The people took interest in wild magic which was aimed at murder, disturbance and ill-feeling among members of the society.[153] In course of time, it became fused into religious establishments of both Hindus and Buddhists.

During the period under review, the valley was the popular centre of Buddhist learning. Many scholars wrote Buddhist literary compositions in Sanskrit which attracted the aspiring scholars from outside. They came over here and went back after having acquired knowledge of different schools of Buddhist teaching. In this way, Kashmir made a great literary contribution to neighbouring regions especially China, Tibet and other Central Asian centres. The first Chinese translation of *gathas* was made by a Kashmiri scholar, Dharmatrata in 221-223 A.D. Harivarman—a famous *Sarvastivadi* scholar of Kashmir composed his work *Satyasiddhi Shastra* in 253 A.D. There were other distinguished Kashmiri scholars who propagated Buddhist learning through translated texts which included manuals, commentaries and versions of Buddhist *Sutras*. Sanghabhuti who reached northern capital of China in 381 A.D. translated *Vinayapitaka* from Sanskrit into Chinese. Gautama

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Sanghdeva went to China in 384 A.D. He wrote several books on Abhidharma branch of Buddhism; Punyatrata and his pupil Dharmayasas went to China at the invitation of Kumarjiva towards the end of fourth century A.D. Buddhavarman (433-439) was a specialist in Vibhasha; Buddhajiva was a collaborator and companion of Fa-hien and reached China by sea in 423, Gunavarman, born in 366 A.D. was met in Central Asia by an another Kashmiri scholar known as Dharmamitra in 431. Gunavarman was born in a royal family of Kashmir. He retired from the world at an early age of 20 years, mastered all the Buddhist scriptures and converted Java, the then flourishing Hindu Kingdom into Buddhism. He was invited by the Wen Emperor to visit China where he reached in 431 A.D. and remained as honoured guest there till his death. His main contribution, besides the translation work of important texts, was that he organised for the first time, *Sangha* for the Chinese nuns.[154] Vimalaksha was a collaborator of Kumarajiva[155] —a son of Kashmiri monk Kumarayana. Kumarajiva (early 5th century) was a highly accomplished scholar, exegetist and a great Mahayanist teacher. He was born in Kucha and the name given to him was a combination of the names of his Indian father Kumarayana and Kuchan mother Jiva. He was, by dint of his talent and scholarship, regarded as one of the four 'suns' of Buddhism. He along with Vimalaksha and another Kashmiri scholar Buddhayasas completed education in Kashmir itself and then worked in Kucha, Kashghar and other places. Kumarajiva died at Changan in 412 or 413 A.D. leaving behind a large number of disciples and pupils who carried on his literary work after him. So also in return Chinese monks and scholars came into Kashmir but their number was far less as compared to those who went from here.[156] Chemong was a traveller from China who reached here in about 404. He was followed by Fa-yong along with 20 monks and reached Kashmir in 420. The visits of foreigners from China continued thereafter and the prominent one was that of Hieun Tsang who visited Kashmir in 631 followed by another scholar of eminence, Ou-kong in 759. All this will show that literary and artistic contribution increased in the entire region of Central Asia during Kushana periods.

On the whole, during this period, Kashmir developed intensive international contacts which turned Buddhism into a world religion. This is supported both by literary and archaeological sources.

Buddhist art and architecture, language and literature and above all the translations of the Buddhist scriptures in the languages of the lands (where it made its footing) symbolise the age-old spirit of unity among the nations which the Kashmiris always held so sacred.

Such is an outline of an early history of the valley ranging from first century to 5th or 6th century A.D. which is amply recognized at Semthan and also from the new findings at Harwan and elsewhere. The cultural material, cosmopolitan in char-

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acter, shows a course of evolution towards the building up of a brilliant historical record which left a rich legacy for the people who followed next. The missing links still being observed again await the turn of the spade.

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6

History and Archaeology

Hindu Period (5th Century to 1171 A.D.)

The 4 m thick deposit of the period as encountered at Semthan covers a period of about seven centuries and is related to the splendid galaxy of monuments which are known for their elegant and superb accomplishment of the flourishing stone architecture in the valley.[1] These monuments or the sculptures belong both to Buddhist and Hindu cultural heritage. Though most of these have been terribly devastated by nature and man-made disaster, yet some of these ruins speak of the extraordinary skill of the people of the valley which they had achieved in raising these religious establishments and are significant testimony of our past civilization. The architectural evolution presented by these remains shows a combination of Sassono-Iranian, Bactro-Gandhara, Graeco-Egyptian elements and also Hellenistic treatment carried over from the Kushana period.

The cultural items in the excavations consisted mainly of ceramics. Its early phase yielded thin red ware represented by variety of shapes which included bowls, dishes, small vases with everted and externally cut rims and slightly vertical necks, jars and goblets. The next phase is marked by medium to thick red ware consisting of long but narrow necked vases with globular body, lid-cum-dishes with everted, bevelled rims, carinated vases with externally thickened rims, storage jars with out-turned and internally thicked rims and round based red ware pots with out-turned rims. Some of the pots bore geometrical designs of finger tip patterns. Some of the sherds carried irregular wavy lines and oblique strokes. Few coins of the historical kings of Hindu rulers were also found. However, the history of art and architecture associated with this period could be devided into the following sub-heads.

1. Pre-Karkota Period (5th-6th Century A.D.)

In the period preceding the Karkotas and with the extinction of Kushana patronage in the valley, hastened due to the advent of white Hunas on the political scene of Kashmir, there arose over three dozen indigenous and foreign rulers who reas-

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serted themselves on the throne in one way or the other. Only few of them have contributed a little in those uncertain days and figure prominently.

Buddhism received a shattering blow from the Huna chief Mihirakula, son of Toramana who after having been defeated in the plains came over to Kashmir in about 525 A.D. Himself being a devotee of Shiva, he let loose the violence and the disaster of Buddhist structures in the valley. Toramana coins were in use over a long period in Kashmir.

Another notable ruler mentioned is Samdhimati Aryaraja who lead a life of poverty, suffered a long imprisonment and 'death at the stake'. Then coming to life again due to spiritual powers of his Guru 'Ishana,' consented to the prayers of his citizens and ruled Kashmir for over four decades. He built Shiva shrines and one such shrine is named after his Guru as 'Isheshvara' (modern village of Ishbar) on the bank of Dal lake, north of Nishat Bagh. His life can be paralleled with the life of Jesus Christ. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that some scholars claim that Jesus Christ visited the valley and that his grave is situated at Khanyar in Srinagar. At the moment, these could be only inerudite statements since no archaeological evidence is available.

After Samdhimati Aryaraja's retirement, Meghavahana, a local man staying in Gandhara was invited to rule the country. Unlike his predecessor, he encouraged the erection of Buddhist establishments.

Matregupa, a nominee and a contemporary of king Vikramaditya-Harsha of Ujjayini, and the father of Shiladitya-Pratapshila (580 *Si-yuki*, ii. p. 261) ruled the country for a brief period and abdicated in favour of a local ruler Pravarsena II. He laid the foundation of a new city called Pravarasenapura—north-west of the old capital of Ashoka's Puranadhisthana. The new capital is identified as the present capital, Srinagar. Ranaditya is mentioned to have erected a Vishnu temple which probably formed the base of the enlarged temple complex of Lalitaditya's Martanda temple. The last ruler in the series of rulers is Baladitya who gave his daughter to a handsome but petty official of his Government, Dulabhavardhana, who after his death became the ruler of the land, and laid the foundation of Karkota dynasty.

The original form of Buddhism was changed with the rise of Mahayanism. The first image of Buddha was made only in the time of Kanishka. Kidara-Kushanas also followed the imperial Kushanas and their cultural traits. In course of time, images of many Gods and Goddesses both of Buddhist and Brahmanical pantheon were made. The impact of the two cultures on each other became quite distinct. Brahmanism was in vogue from time immemorial but Buddhism gifted it with the sculptural art. Kushana coins carry the figures of various deities who were worshipped by different people in their vast empire. In spite of Buddhist influence in Gandhara or in Kashmir, Shaivism occupied a very important place among the

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common people of these regions. From Charsada in North West Frontier Province, a Shiva image was discovered. Standing before the bull Nandi, the deity is three-headed, three-eyed and six-armed holding the *damaru*, *trishula* and *Kamandalu*. It represents a Gandharian style datable to 3rd century.[2] The type in seated posture is of Lokeshvara which also reached Kashmir and Khotan.[3] Terracotta plaque representing crude figure of Shiva as Bhairava was encountered from excavations at the site of ancient temple of Martanda, district Anantnag from the earlier levels.[4] Besides Shiva, the worship of Vishnu, Karttikeya, Shakti (Devi) was also prevalent. The anthropomorphic conception of the deities necessitated the erection of structural shrines. These shrines at the initial stages must have consisted of small chambers of undressed stones—the type we come across at Harwan. These small shrines must have been superimposed by flat roofs raised on wooden posts supported by horizontal beams. These small structures afterwards formed nucleus of the temple structure.[5]

The Buddhist structural form in whatever shape it developed in the valley, had its inspiration from Gandhara. In raising the Brahmanical shrines, the pebble or diaper pebble patterned system of construction gave place to sone courses. In doing so, people continued to pay reverence to Nagas by constructing the temples in the shallow tanks fed with spring waters. One such temple in the series is the main temple of Rudresha at Ladou, 10 kms south-east of Srinagar in Pulwama district built in the midst of a Dhallow lake. It follows the plan and other details of Guniyar temple (5th century) in Swat valley of Gandhara region. It is an example of the semi-circular dome with roof raised by means of stone beams and slabs apparently the outcome of a wooden prototype. Unlike later temples, it is plain both in plan and decoration. Even the pillars at the base do not carry any mouldings. Its semi-circular entrance is crowned by a simple type of pediment. The smaller temple to its back is similar except that its circular doorway presents a slight development in the projection of a portico with trefoil niche which is the main architectural development of the temples raised after this period. This as such is the beginning of stone architecture in the valley.

As compared to the terracotta plaque found at Martand, there are, as already mentioned, terracotta sculpture heads obtained from Ushkur in district Baramulla—the site named after the Kushana emperor Huviska (2nd century). The striking examples are of Buddha, Boddhisattvas, monks, devotees and laymen. These are the finest examples of Buddhist art but when compared to the material from Hadda near Jalalabad in Afghanistan, these are of late Gandharian style datable to late 5th century.[6]

The sculptural products of the period both in stone and metal give a valuable guideline of the artistic development in the valley. A notable stone figure is of

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Kartikeya from Bijibehara (S.P.S. Museum collection). The streamers at the sides of the head, presence of girdle and dagger ornamented with pearls, and marked with bracelets, armlets, garlands, muscular body with garments delineated with deep folds characterise it of a type popular in Kushana period with elements from late Sassano-Iranian art that had penetrated into Gandhara, Bactria and Kashmir in 5th century. It may be mentioned here that the worship of Kartikeya was very much popular in the post-Kushana period.[7] The other specimens of the period bearing more or less similar stylistic features are Goddess Durga and Vishnu from the same locality. The figure of Vishnu claims priority over three-headed type both by reason of its technique and by the presence of one head.[8] The illustration of three heads, dagger or elaborate presence of flower wreath on this deity, is very prominently depicted in the Karkota period on such images. Hence it is the work of early 6th century. On a similar pattern is the Vishnu from Baramulla district (S.P.S. Museum collection).

A more developed, expressive and most significant discovery in recent years is the life size stone statue of Shiva at Fatehgarh in district Baramulla about 76 kms from Srinagar. This remarkable find was discovered during the clearance of the area in and around the Shiva temple at Fatehgarh. The figure measures 1.76 m × 0.57 m and is unique of its kind so far discovered in the valley. Its material is grey lime stone with remarkable and effective patterns.[9] The image bears three heads, the central one is shown as *Saumya* (peaceful) type. The side heads are smaller, the right one is of *Ugra* type with the beard while the left one is of a female. Shiva's *Saumya* and *Ghora* aspects are combined with his Shakti *Uma*. The main figure is three-eyed, wears *Jatamukuta*, long ear lobes, necklace in three rows, a sacred thread, a *vanamala* touching the knees and surprisingly enough bears *Srivatsa* symbol associated with Vishnu. On the back, carved again is the terrific form (*Ugra*) of Shiva as Bhairava. It carries three protruding eyes, broad nose, open mouth with a tusk, long ears with hoods of snakes as their lobes, their tails tied together near the chest. Its sacred thread is also of the snake and this form of Shiva also carries *Srivatsa* symbol. While as the main image bears four hands, one of the upper right hands, the only intact one, holds a rosary. The figure on the back side is two armed. Both the hands are kept in front of the belly and are carrying a trident in a horizontal position along with a bell hanging in the left hand. The lower portion is covered with tiger's cloth tied with a narrow belt at the waist and there is a figure of lion's head carved on the flap of the loin cloth on the left thigh. The legs below the knees are hidden by Nandivahana of Lord Shiva.

Strikingly exemplified are the two tiny images carved on the heads of the main figure and that of Bhairava at the back. The front one is a seated figure holding a water pot in the left hand. The rear one is shown in Lalitasana. The former was

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identified as Goddess Ganga and the latter as flying Gandharva.[10] Some doubts were raised against the identification of these figures. It was maintained that the figure presumed to be Ganga is in all probability that of Buddha in dhayani mudra while as the figure at the head of Bhairava is a flying Yaksha. The presence of these figures indicated a meeting ground of Buddhism and Brahmanism.[11] Others identified these as Lakulisha and Vatuka Bhairava respectively and maintained that the statute marks the synthesis of Buddhism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism.[12] In that case, the artist has also associated the conception of Shaktism by carving the face of *Uma* with a little prominence. In the valley a Shaivite in common with the Vaishnavite and Shakta has to worship the Panchayatana—a group of five divinities—Shiva, Vishnu, Devi, Ganesha and Surya. The difference is noticeable only in the prominence given to a member of this Pentad. With the Shaivites, Shiva is prominent and with the Vaishnavites Vishnu is prominent and with the Shaktas Devi is prominent and so on. However, in Kashmir, temples dedicated to Keshava (Vishnu) and Ishana (Shiva) were erected throughout the length and breadth of the valley.[13] This shows the popularity of these two deities.

The presence of *Batuka* or *Vatuka* (youthful) form of Bhairava in a less ferocious but in a graceful pose is boldly projected over the head of the main figure at the back carrying two distinct objects, a bell and a trident. It is identified as Bhairava himself being the *ghora* or *ugra* form of Shiva. The youthful god is in fact invoked for the holy inspiration of Shakti which helps a seeker towards the right realisation of the supreme bliss. It is on account of the grace of Shakti that Shiva appears in various forms of Sadashiva which are conditioned by space and time (Vijana-Bhairava, *KSTS* Nos. 8 & 9, pp. 14, 15).

The five faces of Sadashiva do not refer to feminine form of *Uma*. The possibility appears that it is a form of Svacchanda Bhairava and his five faces are his five-fold glory. It represents the secret worship of both *Aghora* and *Saumya* forms. Svacchanda is synonymous with 'Svatantra' (free will). It is a force independent of any force.

Svacchanda Bhairava is also said to possess five faces which include *Ishana, Tatpurusha, Ghora, Vamadeva* and *Sadyojata*, representing his five faculties as *Chit* (consciousness), *Ananda* (bliss), *Iccha* (will), *Jnana* (wisdom), and *Kriya* (activity).

Ishana on the head indicates supreme sovereignity over the entire creation. *Tatpurusha* symbolises the real essence of all organic and inorganic life. *Aghora* is the heart of the vitalising principle of the universe. *Vamadeva* represents the private parts of the body indicative of the world of creation. The entire body is represented by *Sadyojata* with the power to create manifold forms at will, (M.S. Kaul, introduction to Sri Svacchanda Bhairava No. XXXI, 1920 and Sri Mrigendra Tantram, No.

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Still whatever the reality behind the identification of the individual components of this assorted image of the period, it marks the fusion of indigenous and foreign elements in fostering the social and religious activities of the people. Besides, it helped to lay out the fundamental principles which guided and controlled the production of sculptures and also the art of building not only in this period but also in the successive periods as well.

There are few bronze sculptures which also display Bactro-Gandhara style. One such typical image is the standing figure of Buddha clad in *trichivara*—the three monastic garments, which obscure the forms of the body, and a lotus symbol is engraved on the palm of the right hand raised in the *abayamudra*, the attitude of granting immunity from fear. A special feature is the auspicious mark on the forehead which may be the prototype of the third eye of Shiva.[14] In that case also, it shows the synchronization of the religious beliefs of the people.

2. Karkota Period (600-855 A.D.)

Durlabhavardhana had his descent from Karkota Naga of the valley and hence the dynasty of which he laid the foundation is named as the Karkota Dynasty. On numismatic and foreign notes, he succeeded his father-in-law immediately after 6th century. The sequence of events is more clear from that period onwards than that of the preceding period. In all sixteen kings ruled the land for over two centuries and a half some of whom played a prominent role in the expansion of economic, political, social, religious and cultural fields beyond the frontiers of the valley.

This period witnessed unprecedented urge for the production of sculptures and the building activity. The sculptures of exquisitely fine workmanship of the period in stone are life size images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Lokeshvara, and the upper portion of the sculpture representing birth of Siddartha. Among the Brahmanical images notable ones are Chamunda, Indrani, Varahi, Vaishnavi etc representing female divinities of Matrikas, standing and seated Shiva images, some being three-headed, one being four-headed and four-armed seated figure of Ganesha etc. These have been obtained during the course of digging from the ancient site of Pandrethan (ancient Puranadishthana).

These images not only show the influence of the art of Imperial Guptas but also the Hellenistic influence of Gandhara on the basis of which these definitely fall before 7th century. The Buddhist sculptures in particular are contemporary with the two ruined stupas which were enclosed by compound walls. The drum of one of the stupas was decorated with sculptures some of which have been referred to earlier also. These Buddhist remains correspond to the tooth-relic stupa and monastery as well mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang. This also confirms that these

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structures or the sculptures belong to a date prior to the visit of the pilgrim in the year 631 A.D. Contemporary with these was the Jayendra Vihara where he resided during his stay here in the new capital of Pravarsenapura situated to the north-west of the old capital (Puranadhishthana).[15] Perhaps the excavator of Buddhist remains at Pandrethan assigned these to 8th century on the basis of only then exposed stupa built by Lalitaditya at Ushkur (Huvishkapura).[16] Again this assertion stands nullified in view of the earlier structure exposed below the stupa of Lalitaditya here.[17] Though on a low scale, there appears to be the revival of Buddhist tradition soon after the departure of Hunas. There was a rise in the popularity of Buddhism during the Karkota period, even if the rulers of the dynasty were ardent devotees of Vishnu. This is known from the numerous buildings erected by the rulers in honour of their family deity. While these sanctuaries were quite vigorous and flourishing, yet they did not lack in raising the Buddhist shrines. Anangalekha, the queen of king Durlabhavardhana—the founder of the dynasty built a Buddhist vihara which she named as Anangabhavana Vihara. The king himself accorded a royal reception to Hieun Tsang on his visit to the valley and provided him with all the facilities required by him. During this period the kingdom of Kashmir included the territories of Takshashila (Taxila), Urasa (Hazara), Simpura (Salt Range), Parnotsa (Poonch) and Rajpapuri (Rajouri). His son Durlabhaka—Pratapaditya II laid the foundation of the town which he named after him and is known as Pratapapura (Tapar) situated on the national highway from Srinagar to Baramulla,[18] 29 kms to the west of Srinagar.

Following its identification with that of the town of king Pratapaditya and presence of some isolated carved stones, excavations at the site were taken up on 5th September 1942 and closed on 12th December 1942. During this short span of three months, the base, courtyard and the plinth of the enclosure wall of the temple were exposed. The base is 60′ 6″ externally. Its walls are 8′ high and 4′ thick. The plinth of the enclosure wall is also square measuring 284′ on each side with the width and height of 20′ and 5′ respectively. Each side the exposed height of the base comprises five courses, and on the top of the uppermost course projected cornice is observed which must have served as circumambulatory passage. The entrance or the gateway stands in the middle of the western side of the quadrangle and its height lends an imposing view to the structure. While descending from the inner courses of the staircase of the high gateway, a long row of base pillars on either side are met which must have served as a covered passage to the temple. It represents a unique feature which is not noticed in such shrines erected after it. Actually, this complex could have been embellished with an immense sized structure of Garuda-dhvaja column—an emblem or the banner of divine eagle, the vehicle of Vishnu. Such columns or the image of Garuda facing the main shrine were the

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common features of Vaishnava temples. Over the plinth of the enclosure walls are noticed the long row of pillar bases for the installation of entrance columns probably of the range of cells facing the main shrine. This type of architectural character is an inspiration from the stupa-courts of Ghandhara and in the valley this reached its culmination during the time of his son and successor by mid-8th century. The temple is of a Vimana type dedicated to Vishnu which is obvious from the stepped stone structure of Garuda, isolated Vishnu images and the inscriptions. Out of the two inscriptions one is cut in three pieces and is found in toto and the other is only a part. Both of them are in Sanskrit and are incised on stones in the Sharada script. The first one which is complete reads that in the Saptrishi year 4233 on the 15th day of the bright half of Har (June 1157) in the reign of the glorious Paramanda, it was built by Ghagga the worthy son of a Brahaman, Jagaraja, who was a great teacher of the Vaishnava cult. The second one reads that (it was) raised by . . . . the head mason Lakshma. These two inscriptions were found in the debris near the gateway and also on the right wing of the main shrine respectively.[19] The chief interest here is that the inscription mentions the king Paramanda who does not figure in the list of Kashmiri rulers. According to Kalhana, Parmandi was the son of Jayasimha, ruler of Kashmir (1128-49).[20] Jonaraja mentions that the king ruling this time was Paramanuka, the son and successor of king Jayasimha.[21] It seems that Paramanda, Parmandi or Paramanuka signify the same person.

Although Kalhana does not speak anything as to the construction of a temple by Pratapaditya referred to above while describing his foundation of a town named Pratapapura yet it is understood that he must have built a temple in the centre of the township like all other foundations such as those of Parihasapura, Awantipura, Martanda and Shankarapura which were provided with temples by the rulers who followed him. The Persian chronicler Hassan in his *Tarikh* clearly says that the temple at Tapar was built by Pratapaditya II and that after its destruction in 1390-1414, its material was used by Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470) in constructing the embankment from Inderkot to Sopore.

It is also known from Kalhana, that his father Durlabhavardhana built the temple of Durlabhaswamin and his other son Malhana, *Malhanasvamin.* Chandrapida, and Muktapida sons of Pratapaditya II also built temples sacred to Vishnu.[22] It is, therefore, probable that the family deity of Pratapaditya II was also Vishnu and that the temple built by him at Tapar bore the name of Pratapasvamin.

It is, also, reasonable to believe that the temple was originally constructed by Pratapaditya II and that its rampart particularly built of wood like that of Chakradhara temple at Bijibehara, was destroyed. It is only then that it was repaired or rebuilt by Ghagga during the reign of king Paramanda in 12th century.

In the process of development especially next to Ladou, is the Shankarcharya

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temple standing on the summit of Gopadari hill overlooking the city of Srinagar and the river Jhelum down below. Occupying a unique position, the temple is of a simple structure built on a high octagonal plinth approached by a long flight of steps. It is of unusual shape. It is square externally with two projections on each side. Internally it is circular and has an entrance semi-circular at the top and is surmounted by a shallow and steep pediment. The temple is adorned by a low parapet wall carrying 84 round headed recesses enclosed in rectangular panels. A similar type of doorway gives access to the chamber at a low level to its north. However, the absence of trefoiled arches, or entrances or of the facets on the three sides of the main shrine characterize it also to be the beginning of the classical art in the valley.

The beginning of the sunk trefoil arch, flat offsets changed into moulded niches with triangular covering and the shrine surrounded by unornamented wall of the square courtyard indicates the process of development particularly in respect of pediment and arch motif at Narastan about 48 kms south-east of Srinagar. Round headed arches of the early shrines in the valley have been mistaken to be an imitation from Muslim models[23] as at Shankaracharya temple or in one of the temple wall to the north of Zain-ul-Abidin's tomb at Srinagar. Circular arch motifs are in fact the prototype of Chaitya arches of Buddhist establishments and finally appeared as a decorative motif in early Brahmanical temples.[24] So far as the main temples are concerned, the lower course of the ceiling which still survives in its original shape at Shankaracharya temple is built of light porous stones and is dome-shaped.[25] The modern addition indicates that it was repaired during Mughal times as is clear from a Persian inscription which records the date as A.H. 1054 corresponding to 1644 A.D. So also with the discovery of a broken stone head of an image, probably of Shiva datable to 6th-7th century A.D. from the tomb of the mother of Zain-ul-Abidin at Srinagar, it is evident that the foregoing structure in the tomb is contemporary with that of Shankaracharya temple. This is an impressive evidence that the circular recesses in the rectangular frames as found at these places are of the same age and conveniently fall before the advent of classical art of Kashmir.

In Kashmir there was an epoch making archaeological discovery in the period of several manuscripts deposited in stupas at Gilgit—the country of the Darads and the seat of the later Shahi rulers.

These manuscripts along with the other antiquities were found during the course of excavations at Nawapura near the Gilgit cantonement. Four mounds marked A, B, C and D were opened at this village situated at a distance of 8 kms from Gilgit proper. On opening, mound C appeared to be a stone edifice of three storeys and roundish in form having a height of 22′ with mud plaster inside. Its

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circumference measured 50′ internally. To strengthen the wall of the edifice and to support the roof on its top, wood work was used which consisted of:

a) 16 uprights built at varying intervals with the wall.
b) 1 beam 17′ long and 18″ both in thickness and breadth with its two ends fixed in the wall diametrically.
c) 4 couples of uprights fixed between the stones in basement storey 2′ away from the wall inside at irregular intervals.
d) 5 uprights standing in the centre on the diametrical beam with crosses at the bottom fixed with the 4 couples mentioned above.

The mounds A, B and D also revealed stone edifices of similar make and form without any wood work inside and were 10′ in height uniformally.

Six manuscripts, four being complete were found besides several fragments of manuscripts in excavating mound C described above. They were all found under two wooden covers and having the papier machie work on the outside. The leaves were held together by a record lace or string passing through a hole punched in the middle of each and wound round the whole set. Covers of the three manuscripts are richly painted on the inside. On the inside of the top cover of *Samghatasutra* are painted Purisa or the Lord of Gilgit who bears two names, one Sanskrit and one Tibetan, i.e. Nandideva and Patola with the title of Shahanshahi. His minister is dressed in local costume. The name of the queen is written as Ananga Devi. On the inside of the bottom cover is painted Buddha in dialogue with his two devotees Kashayapa or Sarvasura and Maudgalyayana or Bhaisajyasena.[26] *Samghatasutra* had a great appeal to pious Buddhists. The dialogues between Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas as referred to expound the different ways of religious merit without the slightest touch of philosophy.[27]

These manuscripts are written in the changing forms of the post-Gupta Brahmi now called the Gilgit Brahmi and also in the proto-Sharada script. So far many Buddhist texts were known only through their Chinese and Tibetan translations but with the discovery of these manuscripts, the original Sanskrit form of the Buddhist literature is available for the first time on the soil of India. Ascribable to 6th-7th century A.D., these texts include a large number of Sutras, Prajnaparamita, Saddharma Pundrika and above all the Sanskrit Vinaya literature of Mula Sarvastivadins.[28] They also prove the close connection of this region with Khotan in the north and Kashmir valley in the south.[29] A remarkable cultural diffusion mainly through the influence of Buddhism is amply illustrated with the discovery of vast wealth of archaeological, epigraphical and other documents from Khotan, Niya, Miran and other regions of Central Asia. As in Kashmir, the Brahmanical faith was also practised there. The discovery of wooden tablets, manuscripts, seals, stucco reliefs, sculptural fragments and representations of lotuses from an important site of

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Niya and other such sites in Khotan indicate a close historical connection between Kashmir and Khotan.[30] Three of the manuscripts were written on birch bark, one on palm leaf besides the torn leaves. However, the manuscripts and fragments are now lying in various institutions in India like at Delhi, Pune, Ujjain, Heras Institute, Bombay, Srinagar (S.P.S. Museum and C.A. Museum) and also in London and Pakistan. Many foreign and Indian scholars are having indepth study of this literature.

In addition to these, relic chambers yielded hundreds of votive clay stupas, tiny tablets inscribed with Buddhist creed, relieved plaques,[31] rings of ivory and brass, pearl beads, birch bark, amulets and such other objects which are of outstanding importance and value regarding the Buddhist settlements of the area.

The classical order of the temple architecture in the valley is a conception from the monastic buildings of Gandhara. Even prior to the advent of Karkotas, a native of that region, Meghavahana, was invited by the subjects of the valley to rule the land. He was pious and at the same time a vigorous ruler. He prohibited the killing of animals in the kingdom and founded a village after his name and his queen built a lofty vihara named after her as *Amratabhavana* (modern Antabhavan) situated close to the present suburb of Vicharnag.[32] Even in its ruined state, it was over 20′ high. Around it a great quadrangular building was marked by large carved stones noticed by the Chinese pilgrim Ou-Kong in the middle of 8th century.[33]

Mid-8th century gave also a strong impetus in the building of Brahmanical temples in the valley whose composition again shows an inspiration from the stupa courts of the Buddhist monasteries of Gandhara.[34] From this period onwards, the valley witnessed a brilliant manifestation of progressive artistic genius demonstrated by refined, rich and lovely architectural enrichment. As compared to excessively plain treatment of earlier shrines, the exterior walls of such buildings were now richly decorated with sculptures. The principles, particulars and designs were to be strictly adhered to according to rules prescribed in *Vastushastra* or "Rules of Architecture". According to *Prasadamandnam*—a brief treatise on Hindu architecture and sculpture, much stress had to be laid on the particular period of time, the auspicious conjunction of stars, performance of rites and all such other related items conducive to the successful completion of the constructional work of the temples and edifices. The site chosen for the temple had to be demarcated and worship offered to it with flowers, rice and other material. The construction began with the usual salutation to Ganesha and also to *Karanjeshvari*—the divine Mother of trees which was the main source of timber for constructional work of temples and mansions. This gives an unmistakable evidence that the superstructure or the support to the structures of the earlier temples was of wood. The instructions in the treatise, as a matter of fact, are for the erection of temples whether built of wood,

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earth, bricks or stone or for digging of wells, ponds and monasteries etc. Details regarding the mouldings of the bases, the pitha or the pedastal, Garbha Griha or the sanctuary of the temple, various sizes of idols or statues and their position, Mandapas or open halls, platforms, raised platform along with the walls of council halls, and also for the construction of Kalasha were also incorporated in *Prasadamandnam*. It had been argued that the temples of Kashmir differed from the rest of India mostly because of the absence of Sikhara or Kalasha. It was, however, maintained by Kalhana that the gilt parasols were erected over the temples.[35] The treatise of *Prasadamandnam* records that this crowning item of the religious establishment is its foremost part which brings enormous bliss and prosperity to the master. In no case, there should be any omission in the erection of *Dhvaja* or the flag staff on a temple since according to it demons come to reside in the temples without it. The presence of *Dhvaja* gratifies the divine beings. The interesting part is that it has been mentioned that these were to be circular and made of strong and durable wood.[36] The wood being a perishable item, it did not leave any trace behind on the present standing ruins which made the scholars to presume that there is no sign of Sikhara found with the structures.[37] This in the light of the revelation detailed out in the Kashmiri treatise needs to be rectified.

The architectural style of Kashmiri temples, both Buddhist and Hindu in the 8th century carry peculiar characteristics. These are to be discerned in the massiveness of plinths, thickness of walls, square, vaulted or bracketed capitals. The niches or the porches are carved into a bold trefoiled arches within a high pitched triangular pediment like the trefold niche of Bamiyan or its prototype from the monastery of Takht-i-Bhai or from Sirkap in Gandhara. In fact the arch was employed in Egypt at a very early date and crude brick arches were in common use in roofing tombs there.[38] So also the striking feature of the Kashmiri temples are the fluted columns which are of the similar character with that of the fluted columns of the Temple of Jupiter or that of the ruins of Pompeii in Rome.[39] Over the fluted portion of the columns, the area is invariably designed with a series of full-blown lotus petals. Again the capital or the entablature consisting of the architrave and the cornice again resembles the Doric order of the classical model.[40] These components of the columns gave a majestic look to the cellular peristyle which surrounded the central shrine within a rectangular courtyard. The universal employment of pyramidal roof carved with dentils and other architectural designs is significant as compared to flat roofs. The interior of the pyramid consisting of the ceiling which being peculiar to Kashmir was mostly dome-shaped. It is composed of projecting horizontal courses and marked by a series of concentric circles, with the opening at the top closed by single slab designed sometimes with a lotus. The other type of the period was that of corbelled ceiling which was supported on an elaborate system of overlapping

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stones, the interior space of which was left hollow for considerations of weight and economy. This system of ceiling was followed in India also.[41] The perfection obtained in the style of architecture in Kashmir is the production of cross currents that have come from the Graeco-Roman schools, Graeco-Buddhist monastic buildings of Gandhara, Central Asia and China and the building knowledge of such shrines in India duly glorified with the local talent. All these diverse forces received due recognition in the building of religious establishments with the arrival of Lalitaditya (699-736) on the political scene of Kashmir. This was a major period of building activities accomplished mainly due to the wealth and power of the monarch. He ushered in a new memorable period not only in the history of Kashmir but also in that of whole of India.[42]

Lalitaditya amassed unaccountable wealth during his various expeditions in India and outside which no king of Kashmir could collect after him.[43] Besides, with the active participation of master sculptors from outside numerous townships were founded and a large number of Brahmanical and Buddhist buildings were erected. An impressive proof of the building operations of this great monarch is afforded by the remains marking the site of the town of Parihasapura. This township once commanded a magnificent situation when it stood on the confluence of Sindhu (Sind) and Vitasta (Behat or Jhelum) rivers.[44]

Locally known as Paraspor or Divar, the ancient site of Parihasapura is situated at a distance of 23 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar-Baramulla national highway. This capital city of 8th century A.D. is the glaring proof of mutual brotherhood, love and affection among the people of the valley belonging to different faiths. It is known that the king like his ancestors was himself a devotee of Vishnu, as is evident from the numerous buildings in which he installed the images of Vishnu. Here in the temple of Muktakesava, he kept a golden image of Vishnu, in the temple of Parihaskesava, an image of Vishnu made of silver, in the Mahavaraha temple, the image of Vishnu clad in golden armour and then again the silver image of Vishnu was installed in the temple of Goverdhanadhara. As at present, the entire complex of these monuments lay in heap of stones which include massive stone blocks, carved members of capitals, and numerous fragments of lintels. Lalitaditya's minister, Mitrasarman put up a Shivalinga here which he named as Mitrashvara.[45] On the other side of the mound, Buddhist edifices were constructed in close proximity to each other and which are represented by a *stupa*, a monastery and Chaitya or a Buddhist temple. The ruins of these imposing monuments still survive and give considerable evidence in the art of architectural construction and the sculptured embellishment of the period presenting a religious harmony among the Vaishnavites which formed the majority of the population and the minorities marked by Buddhists and Shaivites.

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Lalitaditya's Tukhara minister Chankuna built a *stupa* which was loftier than any other buildings of the king himself. Chankuna was a Buddhist Tukharian and was Lalitaditya's chief minister and adviser. He had better understanding of Buddhism than his master and with the technical know-how of the master sculptors from Tukhara, he built this *stupa* which is a pride of workmanship. Its massive style and impressive dignity of sculptures mark it as a specimen of advanced structural technique. Its double platform served as circumambulatory passages. The flank walls of the stairs provided on each side of the structure were adorned with seated and cross-legged atlants. Front walls of the upper stairs were provided with standing atlants which support the entablature both by their head and upraised hands. The figure of an atlant is shown as well-dressed and wears an imposing garland indicative of the fact that he is happy to take the divine load. Such grotesque figures are common in Gandhara.[46] The niches of the drum bore the graceful sculptures of standing and seated Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. These images present a superlatively fine workmanship. One such figure of Buddha wearing a jewelled crown on his head and the drapery with well folded hems, slender torso, and with an almost effiminate appearance betray the tradition of West Asian association along with that of Bactro-Gandhara region.[47] Again an image of Dhyani-Buddha with hands placed over one another in the lap and with a demure-looking countenance has been shown seated in a trefoil arch which is the main embellishment of temple architecture in the valley. In one of the standing figures of Bodhisattvas, among other things, mark of *Srivatsa* has been placed on the chest which is generally the auspicious mark of Vishnu.[48] This shows the mutual understanding of the two faiths and illustrates a stage of transition between such Buddhist images and the orthodox Vishnu images. Numerous metal images were also designed. Chankuna besides the stupa made many golden images of Jinas, i.e. Buddhas. The king himself, apart from Vishnu images in metal made a gigantic statue of Buddha (Brhad-Buddha) in copper which was possibly in addition to the one he made for his 'ever-rich Rajavihara' built by him at the site.[49] He must have received inspiration for making these large images from the colossal Buddha image of Bamiyan in Afghanistan which along with other regions was under his control.[50]

Lalitaditya's Royal Monastery (Rajavihara) built to the south of Chankuna's *stupa* is a quadrangle of twenty-six cells fronted by a running verandah. The cell in the centre of the back wall is larger than the rest and must have been used as a shrine for the large Buddha image made by the king. Some of the cells were meant for the monks associated with the upkeep of the monastery. All the cells surround an open and square courtyard which is a distinctive style noticeable in such structures throughout India. It is this fundamental principle which guided and controlled the art of building Brahmanical structures as well. While removing stone facing on

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the northern side only a year back, a new mode of construction of these cells came to limelight. The cells stood bifurcated by raising walls of unhewn stones of about 10′ in height each from the base at equal distances. The space in between was filled with mud. The top portion only of the cells was paved with flag stones which also covered the verandah and the courtyard. Only the outer facing was covered with the carved stones. Whether this is a later phase or the original phenomenon is yet to be substantiated. The details of the repairs clearly distinguishable in the exterior of the eastern and western walls have not been detailed out.[51] Arrangements for storage of water in a reservoir cut out of block of a single stone and stone drains passing underneath the cells were also made. While excavating the area, forty-four silver coins were found in one of the cells in the north. Among others, these included the coins of king's grandfather Durlabhadeva and Jayapida-Vinayaditya, his grandson.[52]

Another structure to the south of the monastery is the Chaitya or the Buddhist temple. Built on the pattern of Chankuna's *stupa*, it is a square chamber surrounded by a circumambulatory passage and the ceiling was supported on a set of four columns, the bases of which still survive. This building possesses extraordinary massive blocks of stones which were generally used in ancient Egyptian buildings.[53] For instance a single block of stone in the inner chamber measures 35.6 × 30.5 × 15.2 metres upon which the main image of Buddha must have stood. The sanctum is preceded by a vestibule and the entrance faces to the east which is capped by a trefoil arch within a triangular pediment. As in the case of the *stupa*, the flank walls of the stair were decorated with atlantes and the projection parts of the structure consisted of a string course of *Kirtimukhas*—'faces of fame' or lion's heads, each capped by a floral motif alternating with trefoil arches. The architectural composition of the structure is of more inspiring proportions and character.

Striking of so many coins, making of numerous images in different or mixed metals and erection of huge statues in embossed and gilt copper points towards a highly developed process of planning, casting, moulding and armoury. Copper mines were available during this period.[54]

The importance of this flourishing and prosperous capital dwindled with the change in the course of river Vitasta resulting in the removal of the junction of the river with that of Sindhu from here to a place at a distance of 5 kms from Parihasapura and about 15 kms in a direct line to north-west of Srinagar. The new place of confluence of the two rivers afterwards took its name from Sultan Shahab-ud-din (1354-1373) who founded this town after his own name as Shahab-ud-dinpur now called Shadipur.[55] The change in junction of the two rivers was because of an important result of Suyya's regulation of the Vitasta during the reign of Avantivarman (855-883) of Utpala dynasty. This encouraged the later rulers of Kashmir

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to utilise for other purposes the lavish expenditure or treasures bestowed on all these sanctuaries on different occasions by their predecessors. Shankarvarman (883-901) used the material of these rich sanctuaries for his own town of Shankarapura (modern Patan) about 27 kms north-west of Srinagar where he and his queen built two temples. King Harsha (1089-1101) for his own expenditure desecrated the divine images made of gold, silver and of other metals and material. He spared, though reluctantly, the colossal image of Buddha installed here by Lalitaditya in his Rajavihara.[56]

Parihasapura—the city of the great and courageous king Lalitaditya, thus, symbolises the elements of nature, human aspiration, devotions and ideologies into one unifying force as represented by buildings belonging to different communities which existed side by side. In the same spirit, he built a splendid shrine of Vishnu Muktasvamin and also built a *stupa* over the earlier remains and also a Vihara at Huvishka's capital city known as Huskapura (modern Ushkur).[57]

Next to Parihasapura, the king laid the foundation of another township on a lofty plateau near the present village of Ranbirsinghpura situated about 68 kms south-east of Srinagar and 8 kms north-east of Anantnag. Overlooking a network of rivers, lakes, canals and closely planted groves at its feet and snow-clad mountains at a distance, the site presents an atmosphere of reposeful serenity. The temple dedicated to Surya or Martand occupies a unique position here. Its beauty, magnificence and architectural achievements have struck scholars, art lovers and archaeologists with wonder. The height of the plinth of the central shrine and its side wings, four subsidiary shrines in the four corners, all within a courtyard surrounded by a cellular peristyle numbering 84 and above all the carving of the figures in bold relief in trefoil arched niches under their angular pediments, make the entire composition as magnificent and served as the model for subsequent Brahmanical temples in the valley. The monument even in its present situation exhibits the highest stage of glory and prosperity which the valley could never achieve ever after.

The shrine belongs to Surya-Panchayatna class when, as in this case, small temples were erected in the subsidiary quarters with the Surya temple in the centre. Seated and standing deities were carved in the walls of the imposing gateway, main shrine and miniature shrines some of which were multi-faced like the four-faced *Chaturanan* or Vaikuntha form of Vishnu or of three-faced Mahadeva or that of Surya sitting on a horse flanked by attendants. Vaikuntha form of Vishnu images with the head of a man in the centre, a lion and a boar head on the right and left sides respectively and a demon's face identified as Kapila at the back became very popular. It was the family deity of Karkotas though this form of Vishnu reached its highest architectural prominence during the period of Utpalas.

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Time and again this temple caught the attention of the experts and the works carried out here did bear some fruitful results, but such occasional operations were of very limited durations. In early forties, the tank in the centre of the courtyard and the channels which formed its main subsidiary inlets as also its outlets were uncovered.[58] This was followed by the exposure of basement of outer walls of the main temple thus lending credence to the view of the scholars that Lalitaditya only enlarged upon the work of an earlier king probably that of Ranaditya who is said to have built a temple of Martanda at the village of Simharotsika,[59] as was the case with that of the *stupa* at Ushkur. The carved and sculptured wall of the inner facade differs from the outer one. While the temple was enlarged, the older temple base was not demolished.[60] However, it is unlikely that they were separated from any length of time, certainly not more than a century or two. The data of Ranaditya's rule is shrouded in mystery since he is credited with a reign of three hundred years which simply appears ridiculous. The excavator, however, has observed at the time of exposing the earlier niches of the inner platform and the images carved in these niches that they bore the coating of red lead which showed that the earlier temple was visited and used as a place of worship for a long time in its original form, i.e. with only one platform. Each image is carved out of five stones from head to feet. Those which had stone blocks placed before them were screened by a wall of 2′ width at the time of constructing the outer platform so as to prevent any injury to any part of the images. Subsequently while clearing the compound of the temple on the hill side, the top courses of the subsidiary shrine were excavated. On its west side, a stone was found on which was engraved an inscription in the Sharada script. The inscription is composed in verses in the highly ornate style of the classical Sanskrit. It refers to the installation of an image of the Sun-god by Avantivarman, king of Kashmir (855-883).[61] These evidences therefore revealed beyond any doubt that the construction of the temple such as it is at present owes itself to three distinct rulers—Ranaditya, Lalitaditya and Avantivarman who lived in different periods of the history of Kashmir and not to one person as supposed so far.

Further confirmation was also obtained during the course of excavations conducted outside the cellular peristyle on the south. Even at a depth of 12′ from the present level of the ground, occupational deposits were obtained. The change in the deposits, pottery and other objects was clearly noticed. The deposits at a depth of 2.40 mts show a remarkable change. At this level a 2″ thick uniform floor layer is encountered which goes with the stage of the enlargement of the temple. Below it, the deposits are marked by brown clay, compact muddy deposits and ash-cum-charcoaly deposit with burnt patches in between. The pottery from thick to medium fabric in red ware now changes into red slipped ware of medium fabric represented

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by various shapes including dish on stand having a corrugated waist and bell shaped lower body (Kashmiri *Tashtari*). Along with its black slipped ware of thin fabric with distinctive shapes of bowls, and gritty red ware in thin fabric are mainly represented by miniature vases. The antiquities of the earlier level are marked by a terracotta plaque representing Bhairava form of Shiva, iron slags, fragmentary portion of an iron tool, a terracotta whorl, and a spherical bead of semi-precious stone. In the next phase a brick with a perforation probably used as a door hinge was found.[62] There is no break in the cultural deposits of two phases. Apparently it seems improbable that any great time lag is experienced in the two phases encountered at the site and conveniently coincides with the results of the observations or investigations made earlier.

Another site containing a collection of buildings numbering a dozen and a half in close proximity to each other is at Narannag (ancient Sodaratirtha) situated at a distance of three and a half kms from the village of Wangath (ancient Vashishthashrama) which in itself is some 48 kms north-west of Srinagar. It was one of the important places of pilgrimage in Kashmir from very early times. The place is known after a fine spring in the north-east corner of the site. It is here that the concluding ceremony was performed by the pilgrims on their return journey after consigning the ashes of the dead in the sacred lake of Gangabal below the Haramukhta peak. The entire area which is clad by dense pine and fir forests and with the foaming river with all its noise flowing down below, it presents to the visitor an answer to his eternal craving for beauty and delight which he gets here untouched and unspoiled so far by the hand of the man. The area around the holy mountain of Haramukhta was known as the field of Nandi or of Shiva—*Nandikeshvara*. The particular spot around the spring of Narannag was also known as Bhuteshvara, or (Shiva) Bhutesha—the lord of beings. The ruins here are the production of many rulers of Kashmir right from Jaluka—the son of Ashoka who is credited to have built a stone temple at Nandikeshvara for (Shiva) Bhutesha and bestowed many treasures on it. King Narendraditya of pre-Karkota dynasty consecrated shrines to (Shiva) Bhuteshvara and founded a permanent endowment for the Brahmans.[63] Lalitaditya, on his return from abroad presented a huge sum of money as an expiatory offering to the shrine. Perhaps, basically a Vaishnavite, he was moved by the widespread sanctity of the shrine of Bhuteshvara, and not only this, he erected a lofty temple of stone (Shiva) Jyeshtrudra—in close proximity to this shrine and also made a grant of land and villages. The temple in view of the architectural peculiarities stands identified.

Situated on a square terrace of 30′ 6″, this temple has two entrances opposite to each other and there are closed niches for housing the images on other two sides. A distinct feature of the temple is its domed ceiling composed of solid blocks of

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Kanait (a light and porous limestone) stones laid on horizontal courses with its peak portion crowned by a full blown lotus. Externally the roof is pyramidal. Unlike this principal temple, the other shrines have only one entrance facing to different directions and the ceilings of some are of overlapping stones and while some have a domical one. The more significant, standing separate from the temples, is a stone platform 103′ 6″ long and 67′ 6″ broad with a height of 10″. On all its sides are the massive monolithic bases at regular intervals which indicate that they supported a superstructure of imposing dimensions. The size of the structure and largeness of its parts warrants it to be a Buddhist shrine which goes in line with the secular notion of Lalitaditya. It is too early to say that it is the same *matha* which is said to have been built by Sumanas, the younger brother of Rilhana, the minister of Jayasimha (1128-40).[64]

Avantivarman (855-883), a cultured and liberal ruler, made a pedestal with a silver conduit for bathing of sacred image here also.[65]

The lavish gifts and treasures bestowed upon the shrines was again a cause of concern for those who wanted to benefit themselves with the loot. A powerful Damara, Dhanva from Lahara (modern Lar) plundered the villages attached to the shrine and this unholy action caused much displeasure to king Avantivarman. A similar hateful deed in plundering the treasury of Bhuteshvara was committed by Bhadreshvara, the Prime Minister of king Sangramaraja (1003-28). The shrine was destroyed in conflagration during the reign of Uccala (1001-11) but he built it afresh. Hence here architectural evidences extending over a considerable period are visible.[66] With the lust for the treasures, the hillmen again plundered it during the reign of king Jayasimha (1128-40).[67]

Barring Lalitaditya's grandson, Jayapida, the rulers of Karkotas were weak and inactive. Jayapida was the first ruler of the dynasty who struck coins in his own name and being the promoter of learning, he invited scholars from outside the valley to settle here. One such learned man, Damodargupta wrote a book entitled *Kuttanimata Kavya* which among other things gives information on the pattern of society at that time.[68] In one of his newly founded towns, Jayapura (modern Anderkot) near village Sumbal (Baramulla), he, besides the image of four-faced Vishnu, set up three Buddha images and a large *vihara*.

Jayapida's grandson, Chippatajayapida also called Brahaspati, became the king when he was a minor. His five maternal uncles, Padma, Utpala, Kalyana, Mamma and Dharma exploited him and his successor Ajitapidas' authority and were most influencial persons in the State. All of them built Vishnu temples and named these after their own names. Some of them even laid the foundation of the town sites. Only the town site and the temple ruins of Padma are identified with certainty. The present flourishing town of Pampur on the right bank of river Jhelum, 14 kms from

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Srinagar on Srinagar-Anantnag highway is his ancient township Padampura. The temple ruins of his temple 'Padmasvamin' are situated to the east of the mosque of Shah Hamadan. The plinth of the structure about 3 mts in height is still existing. Besides fluted columns, other architectural members are still seen scattered at the site.

Utpala's Utpalasvamin temple and the town site are identified as the temple ruins and the village of Kakapora respectively. Both the excavated ruins and the village lie on the left side of river Jhelum.

Ajitapida, the puppet king could not rule the land for a longer time because of the rivalry among the four brothers, the maternal uncles of the king Jayapida. He was overthrown and Mamma's son, Anangpida was installed in his place. This made Sukhavarman, the son of Utpala to raise a successful rebellion and place his own nominee, Utpalapida, the son of Ajitapida on the throne.

Sukhavarman was preparing himself to assume the powers of the royal throne but was unfortunately killed by his own deceitful relative as a result of the jealousies and rival factions. At this crucial hour, a powerful minister, Sura by name, deposed his master Utpalapida, and crowned Sukhavarman's son Avantivarman as the king of the land. Thus came the end of Karkota dynasty.

In fact Buddhism had again its hey day during the reign of Karkotas. Supported by lavish gifts, graced by the devout and patronised by the kings of true piety and brilliance, it flourished along with other prominent cults of Vaishnavism and Shaivism. Ou-kong, Chinese travellor who visited Kashmir in 759 noticed more than three hundred *viharas*, numerous *stupas* and images against the assessment of a low order made by Hieun Tsang about a century earlier.[69] An image of war-god Kartikeya along with an image of *Chaturanan* Vishnu with the personified forms of Chakrapurusha and Goda-Devi were unearthed from the site of Bhuteshvara itself some time back[70] followed by sculptures of Shiva and other gods. A fully ornamented sculpture of Kartikeya has come from Taxila as well.[71] In that case its presence at this site along with that of a pillared hall shows that the Buddhist faith was strongly patronized along with other faiths. This site along with that of Parihasapura constituted two popular sites in the valley where archaeological findings reveal that all the three faiths—Buddhism, Vaishnavism and Shaivism were the backbone of Kashmiri culture and part and parcel of social life of the people. Graced by scholars of high repute and gifted with skilled artists and architects of the age, Karkota period was the most fertile and the best known period in the history of Kashmir. The golden era came to an end by mid 9th century when the descendants of Avantivarman (855-883), the founder of Utpala dynasty came on the throne.

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3. Utpala Dynasty (855-939 A.D.)

The greatness achieved by Lalitaditya could not be maintained by his successors. The subjects were oppressed because of court intrigues and lust for power and money. The first ruler of this dynasty—Avantivarman was the son of Sukhavarman and grandson of Utpalapida. He was fully conscious of the pitiable conditions of the people, so he took recourse to peaceful pursuits. By his good deeds, the subjects felt thrilled. Guided by his able, wise and faithful and talented ministers like Sura and Suyya (founder of Suyyapura—modern Sopor) he made sincere efforts to improve the economic condition of the people. In this way his just and peaceful rule of about three decades brought about a second golden age in the sphere of art, architecture and learning.

He selected a commanding site of Avantipura on the right bank of Vitasta and under the foot of one of the spurs of the mountain Wasterwan. It is situated at a distance of eighteen miles south-east of Srinagar and still retains its old name. He, along with his officials and relatives built numerous shrines but at his capital city his two temples, one dedicated to Vishnu called Avantisvamin and the other to Shiva called Avantishvara are the outstanding works of art and show a considerable advance in sculptured decoration. However, with the growing Vaishnava and Shaiva faiths in this period and in the periods that followed, Buddhism in particular remained overshadowed, though its popularity as a religion, of course on a minor scale, lingered on till the advent of Muslims.

Both the temples follow the same plan and layout as observed at Martanda temple though they are smaller in size. The larger one is that of Avantishvara outside the village of Jaubror, half a mile below the town of Avantipura. In size and dimensions it was second to that at Martanda. The base of the main shrine, side walls and the peristyle are conceived on a grand scale but the decoration side has remained incomplete. This may be due to the fact that the construction of the temple was conceived by the king after he ascended the throne and by the time the stage was reached to finalise the decorative part befitting the grandeur of the temple, he turned old or his health did not permit him to complete the work. Out of fear, at his death bed, he disclosed to his minister Sura, that he was attached to Vishnu which he had long hidden. The change in his mental attitude and physical expression is evident from the figures carved on a large oblong stone lying in the compound to the north of the temple. The figures depicted are the king and the queen. They are shown standing and, contrary to a similar one on pilaster of Avantisvami temple, are shown in advanced age. The king is dressed in modest attire and is moustached and bearded. The queen is wearing ornaments of unassuming nature and stands with her husband with two palms folded in *anjali-mudra*. The

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eyes of both are nearly closed and devotees have been shown as entering the holy shrine for offering prayers. Over the head of the queen is the figure with a garland probably for the lord of the temple to be offered by the royal couple.

The temple of Avantisvamin about 2 kms further up and in the town itself is no doubt small but is more ornamented and lavishly planned. In addition to four subsidiary corner shrines, two more shrines have sprung up at the back of the temple in the later period which is a derivation from such *panchayatna* (five shrined type) temples. However, much of the imposing appearance of the monuments lies in the ornamental and sculptural representations in the form of geometrical designs, fluted columns, mythical animals or birds, conventional foilage, vertical beaded lines, human beings—some shown as half human and half animal besides the divine figures. The central shrine contained a Chaturanan form of Vishnu image instead of Surya image at Martanda and such identical forms of Vishnu in the cells of the peristyle also. The other figures being the prominent ones are the Yamuna and Ganga with their *vahanas*, king and queen with the attendants, Kamadeva with his consorts. Among the detached images, noteworthy is the figure of Ardhanarishvara whose right half is male (Shiva) and the left female, representing Parvati, the consort of Shiva. The left half which is adorned with rest of ornaments is the female counterpart whereas the right side being of God himself is quite bare. The interesting part of the sculpture is that the children of the couple—Ganesha and war-god Kartikeya are shown on the right and left respectively. This hermaphrodite form of Shiva was very popular in the valley since it represents the manifestation of Shiva and his energy into one. It symbolises the supreme creative principle. The *linga* and *yoni* are the symbolic form of worship which gained importance now. This strong conception of Shiva and Shakti in one gave birth to world-renowned Trika philosophy which flourished under the benign rule of Avantivarman.

The Trika philosophy of three-fold science recognises three energies of Lord Shiva and is classified into three broad divisions:

1) the Agma Shastra,
2) the Spanda Shastra,
3) the Prattyabhijna Shastra.

The first is considered to be of divine authorship. The doctrines and practices of the system are narrated 'as revelations'. As tradition would have it, Lord Shiva himself revealed the 'Shiva Sutras' to sage Vasugupta who resided in his hermitage below the Mahadeva peak. These were further handed down from teacher to pupil.

The second enunciates the main principle of the system in greater detail and in a more amplified form than the *Shiva Sutras*, without entering into philosophical reasonings in their support.

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The third is the philosophy proper of the system and deals with the doctrines rationally and supports them by reasoning and refutes the views of the opponents.

In the valley the old religion was polytheistic in its character with a special inclination towards ritualistic Shaivism. It was purely a traditional faith and had no literature of its own even at the time of the advent of Buddhism in Kashmir in the reign of Ashoka. But so wise was then the way in which Buddhism spread. There was no interference in others religion and so judicious was the royal patronage of different religions that Brahmans did not very much feel the advent of Buddhism. Antagonism of Brahmans, however, was aroused in consequence of Kanishka's (2nd century A.D.) gift of Kashmir to Buddhist church. His contemporary and a celebrated Buddhist scholar, Nagarjuna used his power both of learning and position to spread Buddhism. This was the time when the struggle between Buddhism and Shaivism began. Shaivism being the local religion remained simply a matter of floating traditions.

As a result of limited probings at Semthan, some light has been thrown on the important events that took place in the following six hundred years. However, it can be said with certainty that Buddha was also accepted as one of the gods. Therefore, whatever conflict of views may have existed among the priests of both Buddhism and Shaivism regarding religious matters, common people followed a mixed faith. Buddhist traits merged in one way or the other not only in Shaivism but as a matter of fact in Vaishnavism also.

The period under review was a period of religious struggle. The Buddhist religion had already passed into decadent form in India in 7th century. At this stage, it had neither the moral and spiritual discipline of the Hinayana nor the idealistic philosophy of the Mahayana. It came under the influence of Vajrayana cult which was founded on esoteric beliefs, rites and practices mainly drawn from the Tantras. These methods are supplemented by a mass of formulae for invoking the terror-striking deities of the cult or averting their attention. In this period, there was a harmonious mixture of the meditative and philosophical aspects of the religion and thus the soil was already congenial to the growth of Tantric Shaivism. It gave both ritual and philosophy more or less the same place as was probably given to them by the then popular faith, so that when it came with all the scriptural support at its back, it was accepted by the common people of Kashmir as their ancestral faith. The philosophical side of the faith was given due recognition.

Kallata, the pupil of Vasugupta—the founder of the Trika or Shaivistic philosophy, flourished in the reign of king Avantivarman in the latter half of the 9th century A.D.[72] The revelation of the *Sutras* must have taken place some years before he was taught the *Sutras* with their meanings and it was Kallata who spread the knowledge by writing explanatory treatise on them.

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Tantrism, which is the magic of charm, brought Buddhism nearer to Shaivism. Tantric form of Buddhism had puzzled the kings and the common man. Chankuna on one occasion threw the charm into the deep waters of the stream, and through the force of the charm, the water got subsided and the king crossed and quickly reached the other shore. Again by dint of another charm, he brought the water of the stream as before. The king, Lalitaditya, was highly moved by this miracle and courteously asked his minister, a Buddhist, for the two charms which he gave to him in exchange for the image of Buddha which was brought on the shoulders of an elephant from Magadha. On receiving the gift, Chankuna expressed that the charms could make the king to cross the waters, but the image of Buddha would enable him to cross the earthly existence (*sansara*).[73] Obviously, the association of Buddhism with the other faiths especially with Shaivism, became more humane and rational in outlook.[74]

The Buddhist concept of void (*Sunya*) propounded on the basis of the philosophy of Nagarjuna, was opposed with reasoning by Somananda—another disciple of Vasugupta in his *Shivadristi*. The work was continued tirelessly and with undaunted zeal by host of philosophers and seers. In fact the charm that this system had for the contemporaries and their successors, the popularity that it enjoyed and the high esteem in which it is held even now was and is due mostly to the labours of a versatile genius—Abhinavagupta who distinguished himself by his works in the next century. He made a formidable opposition to the sister religion of Buddhism who in his voluminous series of works on 'Pratyabhijna' (recognition) extensively dealt with the monastic Shaiva rituals supported by philosophical and psychological theories with strong and convincing arguments as well as extensive quotations from accepted authorities. The existing texts were elucidated with his learned commentaries. In one of his texts, he stated that he took up the writing of the book mainly to induce the people to take recourse exclusively to the path as chalked out by the monastic Shaivism of Kashmir.[75]

The specialised method of teaching Shaivism brought about a truly revolutionary change in the moral and devotional outlook of the Kashmiris. Shiva's worship satisfied the intellectual and spiritual needs of the people. With the official and royal patronage of king Avantivarman, many temples were constructed exclusively devoted to Shiva as at Jaubror by the king himself and the tradition continued thereafter with all the more zeal. Among the number of Shaivistic images found during the excavations at Avantipura, the composite sculpture of Ardhanarishvara is particularly noteworthy.[76] It combines all the components of Lord Shiva. According to 'Trika' point of view, the manifestation of Shiva and Shakti takes place among the adherents of both the faiths.

The identification of Ardhanarishvara image here carries great significance. Its

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worship along with that of Skanda-Kartikeya was in vogue in northern India at a fairly early period. Identical characters of various god-concepts were merged in the composition of Skanda-Kartikeya. This god figured on the tribal coins of an early period and on the coins of the Kushana ruler Huvishka also.

A sculpture of Skanda-Kartikeya datable to 4th century A.D. has come from the Buddhist site of Sahri Bahlol of the North West Frontier Province.[77] The god was worshipped in the valley for ensuring safety and welfare of the progeny.[78] A *vihara* in the name of the god 'Skandabhavanavihara' (modern Khandabhavan) was built during the reign of Pravarsena II on the western outskirts of Srinagar city. It was till recent times an object of sanctity and actual worship. Association of the deity with the original shrine of Buddhist faith should not have been doubted[79] in view of the popularity of the god among the Buddhists and the discovery of sculptural representations from their establishments. The worship of Kartikeya was common among the people from early times. A well developed and fine sculpture from pre-Karkota period from Bijibehara, as already pointed out, corroborates this hypothesis.

It is for the sake of the universe and its creatures that the Absolute has unfolded into this duality but though apparently opposites, they are in essence one.[80] Kalhana for the first time mentions the erection of a temple in honour of Shiva and his consort (Shakti) i.e. Ardhanarishvara at Sureshvari—a holy site on the shore of Dal lake.[81] This site identified as Isheshvara (modern Ishbar) was very popular in Kalhana's time also since in the reign of Jayasimha (1128-49), the temple of Ardhanarishvara was illuminated. He himself invokes the blessings of this form of Shiva (half male and half female) while writing most of the chapters of his chronicle. The temple ruins and carved stones are still extant at the ancient site of Ishbar. The sacred spring enclosed by only sculptural stones in the village is known as Guptaganga. A bath in it is held meritorious on the Vaisakhi day.

The peculiarity about the sculpture of Ardhanarishvara (Avantisvami) is that it also carries standing figures of six-armed Kartikeya and Ganesha—destroyer of demons and protector against misfortunes respectively. Skanda, the other name of Kartikeya, was held in high esteem by Buddhists also. It was one of the deities whose worship was the worship of Ganesha, represented in the Ardhanarishvara sculpture of Awantipur on the right side. King Pravarsena II besides that of Kartikeya was a devotee of Ganesha also called Vinayaka.[82] Along with Ardhanarihsvara image, a stone image of Ganesha has also been found. These images, according to the excavator, originally belonged to the Shiva temple at Jaubror and were later on removed to Awantisvamin temple complex, where they have been found in excavations. However, it may be true in case of Kartikeya as well, but Ganesha's blessings are sought for every ceremony. Terracotta plaques representing the figures of Ganesha were also found. One figure found was four-armed, with a

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large belly and an elephantine trunk in a courtyard of Avantisvamin temple near the floor level and appeared to be of the same date as that of the erection of the temple. In case of another terracotta plaque, the figure of Ganesha carried only two arms. Though this tablet was found in the area to the east of the Avantisvamin temple below six feet of the surface its style and design appeared to be of a later date. However, the town of Avantipura was a centre of Ganesha's worship. Offerings made to the god in the form of sweets were so plentiful, that these were resold in the town.

Other terracotta plaques found and excavated represented female figures, hollow pedastal of five feet height for a terracotta image (missing) of Shiva. Its spout had a shapes of a bull form from which it was again inferred that the missing image was of Shiva.

The pottery from excavations was of course red ware, (medium to thin) and red slipped ware of a finer quality. The shapes represented were large sized jars, pitchers, water jugs, bowls and cups. One of the large jars bore the inscription in Sharada script. The inscription reads 'Maha Sri Avantivarma Ghata-1543'. Its literal meaning would be the Ghata or vessel or (storage) Jar (Kashmiri *mata*) of great and illustrious Avantivarman. There is confusion regarding the date of the inscription. John Marshall referred to the Vikrama era and according to him the date corresponds to 1485. He is of the opinion that the temple complex was reoccupied after its destruction in the 14th century and accordingly fixed the above date. In fact, there is no evidence that the temple was ever reoccupied after it was destroyed and besides there is no word like *Samvat* or *Sam* which should have normally preceded the numerical number. On the other hand, on palaeographical grounds also Sharada alphabets used in the inscription represent an early phase of the script and are similar to the ones used on the coins of Avantivarman. Obviously it may be an index to the running serial number of the question only as presumed, (B.K. Deambi Corpus Sharada Inscription, p. 133). This argument does not also hold good as no other item is reported to bear such numbers. However, the inscription is of great interest since it is the only evidence of the correct identification of the temple with king Avantivarman. Excavations at Avantisvamin temple have also yielded numerous images, majority of which were of Vaikuntha or Chaturvyuha or Chaturmurti or Chaturanan form of Vishnu. These are four-headed and four-armed, heavily jewelled with ornamented crown, clad in *dhoti*, with a dagger hanging from the girdle. The god is shown with Gada Devi (personified mace) and Chakrapurusha (personified wheel) and the Earth goddess emerging between the feet of the Lord with her face turned upwards in his adoration. This repetition of marked sculptural compatibility is the characteristic feature of this class of images being typical of Kashmiri Vaishnavism. The three faces on the front are: the central face is human, the side

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faces on the right and left are stylised ones of a lion and a boar (the representations of the Narasimha and Varaha incarnations of Vishnu). Out of the four hands, the front two hands hold a lotus and a counch shell and the back hands rest on the heads of Chakrapursha and Gadadevi. The demoniacal face on the back is that of Kapila or raudra (terrific). The three faces on the front are also associated with Vasudeva, Shankarsana, Pradyumna and of Anirudha on the back. It is believed that with such a personified form, the Lord sustains the whole world. (*Vishnudharmottara*, Bk III Ch. 47-217). These four aspects of God into one become the chaturvyuha or the Chaturmurti or the Vaikuntha form of Vishnu. As compared to images depicted at Martanda, the images unearthed here are most remarkable and have aroused the curiosity of archaeologists—both Indian and foreign. Some of these are well preserved like the one at Gadadhar temple, Old Secretariat complex at Srinagar or in a privately erected shed at Khrew (ancient Khaduvi), a village to the north-east of Pampor. These images, though not so refined, have come from other sites as well like Verinag (Anantnag), Raithan (Badgam) and even from Akhnoor in Jammu. Outside the State, refined types of these images, probably contemporary with the Avantisvamin Vishnu images are in the temples of Chamba. The most attractive and prototype of Avantipura images is housed in the temple of Harihar there. Here at Avantipur, both religions—Vaishnavism and Shaivism flourished which was possible because of population, wealth and patronage.

The town of Avantipura was a flourishing town even during the Muslim period. This is evident from the collection of coins obtained in the excavations from both the sites. The site at Avantisvamin yielded 121 coins out of which 120 coins were in copper belonging to Toramana, Hindu rulers, Sultans of Shah Mir dynasty, Durrani and Afghan rulers and some to even Dogra Maharajas. The only one silver coin was of Mohammad Shah Durrani. The collection of 108 coins discovered at Avantisvara temple, the only noteworthy find, included mutilated 32 coins which were beyond recognition. The rest included 22 coins of Toramana, one coin of Shankarvarman (883-902), one of Diddakshemagupta (950-58), seven coins of Didda (980-1003), three coins of Sangramaraja (1003-28), two coins of Ananta (1023-63), two coins of Kalasha (1063-69), 34 coins of Harsha (1089-1101), two coins of Sussala (1112-20) and (1121-28), one coin of Jayasimha (1128-49) and one coin of Vijayasuta, Simhadeva (1287-1301).

The town of Avantipura thus presents a rich and splendid example of continued occupation by the rulers of the times. It was so because of its architectural and sculptural achievement coupled with unquestionable promotion in the literary pursuits initiated by the founder. Moved by the loftiest ideas of king Avantivarman, the people witnessed economic stability which was due to the engineering talent of his minister Suyya who undertook unique type of dredging operations of river

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Jhelum, cleared it of debris and fallen rocks and with it raised the height of the beds on either side of the river. The level of the water deepened and with the change of river course, the water flowed into the dammed Wular lake. The people were thus saved from the frequent effects of the disastrous floods. He also arranged on permanent basis the size and the distribution of the water course for each village resulting in excellent production.[83] The supply of the basic essentials of life for the inhabitants provided means for the manifold development of their culture. With the death of Avantivarman in 883, the second golden era of Kashmir's history came to an end. On account of the situation of the town, being on the main route, it maintained its importance even upto the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah (1472-84). Its memory of glorious tradition is still being cherished by the visitors who do not miss to pay a visit to the temple complexes both at Martanda or Avantipura. They are wonderstruck with the supreme climax of Kashmiri architecture displayed here and the superb skill of the artists who have decorated these with the plastic embellishments hinting at the profound religious consciousness of those concerned in their creation.

Next to these are the temples at Buniyar and at Dethamandir on the Jhelum valley road near Rampur and Uri respectively in the Baramulla district. These are of equal elegance but are more restrained in their treatment. Like the foregoing structures, these temples have been laid out on the same lines and carry similar plans and general arrangements. The central building within a rectangular courtyard is surrounded by a cellular peristyle with an imposing gateway for the entrance. The elevated base of the Buniyar shrine with small size of cells is preceded by a colonnade of fluted pillars with intervening trefoil-headed recesses. The cells facing to the main temple follow the same pattern as that of Martanda, or of Avantipura. However, the constructional tradition here suggests that these cells were primarily meant for holding images being the conception of the earliest Buddhist quadrangles which surround the main *stupa* such as Takht-i-Bahi in North Western Province (2nd century A.D.).[84] A small platform in front of the temple must have been the base of the column of Garuda (divine eagle)—vehicle of god Vishnu. This gives credence to the presumption that the temple was dedicated to Vishnu. Instead of the original image of Vishnu, now the pedastal is adorned with Shivalingas. The ceiling of the main temple springs from the string courses and is domical in shape. The gateway with its two chambers, niches and trefoil arches surmounted by steep pediments bracket it as the best preserved magnificent building erected outside the actual limits of the valley.

The temple at Dethamandir is also of the same plan as that of temple at Buniyar. The only marked difference is that the peristyle of this temple has no colonnade and the plinth of the temple is of limestone material and the superstructure is built of *Kanjur*, whereas the entire structure of Buniyar temple is built of

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granite—a hard crystalline rock.

The second ruler of Utpala dynasty was Shankaravarman (883-902)—the son and the successor of the great king Avantivarman. He focused his attention on repulsing the rebel chiefs and went to continue the military expeditions for conquering the world.[85] This necessitated the raising of army which swelled day in and day out with the result that the country was robbed of its population and money. He oppressed the subjects by levying taxes on them, plundered temples, fined villagers who did not deposit the calculated produce from their lands. He even did not hesitate to take profits arising from the sale of incense, sandalwood and other articles of worship offered in the temple. He founded a new capital which he named after him as Shankarapura—modern Patan 27 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar-Baramulla national highway. The capital city was beautified with the erection of two temples dedicated to Shiva. One was Sugandesha temple built by queen Sugandha and the other, Shankaragaurishvara temple, built by the king himself. Both the temples do not differ from other temples in plan or in design,[86] but close investigation reveals that they do not match the grandeur or glory of the earlier structures. Leaving aside the uniformity of the square sanctum, with portico in its front, trefoiled niches surmounted by pediments and the carvings of the repeated patterns or designs like grinning lions heads and human-headed birds observed at both the shrines, one fundamental lacuna is the absence of peristyle at the king's temple of Shankaragaurishvara. The temple plinth stands exposed but still no trace of the peristyle is forthcoming as was earlier presumed.[87] This was also confirmed by undertaking trial trenches. Recent operations for laying out the garden around the temple also did not yield any such traces of peristyle or the side shrines. This shows the beginning of the decadence that was in the offing. The huge blocks of the stones utilised in the temple confirm the writing of the historian Kalhana that in order to raise the fame of his newly founded capital, he robbed the shrines at Parihasapura of whatever value was there.[88] One of the stones of the floor of the sanctum measures 3.80 mts long and 3.05 mts wide with nine holes which were meant for fixing of Shivalingas even if the trefoiled niches of the side walls contained the figures of Shiva (identified as Tripuriavshvara) and that of Ganesha.

It appears that from this period onwards the worship of Shiva was projected by the phallic images representing the generative force. The need for it must have arisen because of the reduction of the population as a result of military exploits undertaken by the king. Human faced Shivalingas were also carved. Four-faced Shivalinga at Sheri below Baramulla, and one-faced Shivalinga at Kothi Tirtha in Baramulla are worthy of mention. Sculptural forms carved out of linga itself did not gather much strength. Against this, the symbolic representation of Shiva in the form of linga dominated the scene. The worship of this formless manifestation made

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vigorous headway among the kings and common people. Quite likely this required less skill and money power. The people were impoverished with heavy taxation and there were insatiable demands for forced labour and military service. Considered to be the cause of creation, animate and inanimate, the worship of Shiva in the form of linga gained momentum. His blessings were sought for the sake of offsprings and for good crops.[89] No doubt, the worship of Shiva was prevalent from early times but the form of worship in this period was different from the one practised earlier.[90] Separate temples were erected for housing the lingas and side by side gigantic Shivalingas were erected at conspicuous places. A large temple at Fatehgarh, about six kms below Baramulla with features more or less like that of Buniyar temple but devoid of peristyle and high plinth was built for installing a colossal Shivalinga in its sanctum, a large fragment of which is still lying there. This temple has an interesting arrangement of corbelling type of ceiling. A gigantic and still standing Shivalinga is noticeable near the Gurdwara on Baramulla-Ushkur link road. Its height is 5.65 mts (exposed portion only) and the bottom is still to go further. The circumference of the lower portion is 5.50 mts and that of the central part is 5.10 mts. The top portion is covered with mulberry tree. The Yagnopavit is shown going round the linga in bold relief. To the east of *stupa* at Huvishkapura (modern Ushkur), another such linga was located on the fringe of the mound on the left side of Baramulla-Gulmarg road. The height of the exposed part of the linga is 3.90 mts and it is quite likely that it may go further about a metre.

The king's minister Ratnavardhana built a glorious temple of Sadashiva.[91] Its ruins have recently been located among the bushes and jungle growth on the footpath leading to the mound of the neolithic site of Kulladur.

His town, even with the plundering of material from other temples especially from Parihasapura never rose to any marked significance and remained merely as Pattana—a town now known to us as Patan.

His death came while he was on his expedition to Urasha—modern Hazara and his successors ruled for short periods like bubbles produced in the water by a downpour of rain.[92] The subsequent history of Kashmir is the period of troubles, when unscrupulous ministers killed their masters by resorting to treacherous methods, brother killed a brother and father killed his son, wife her husband and even children. The normal working of the government was hindered further by the rebel groups of Tantrins, Ekangas and powerful Damaras.

Shankarvarman was succeeded by his son Gopalavarman (902-904) who being minor ruled under the guardianship of his mother Sugandha. Prabhakaradeva, the minister took undue advantage of the queen's favour. He plundered the riches and unlike Shankarvarman's policy he started negotiations with the rebellious Hindu Shahiya dynasty of Kabul which in the long run brought about the fall of the

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dynasty. Realising the loot of the treasury chests, the king, before he could take any action against Prabhakaradeva, was killed by the use of sorcery. He was succeeded by his second brother Samkata who died only after ten days and thus bringing an end to Shankarvarman's lineage.[93] For the next two years (904-906), queen Sugandha resumed the royal power herself. During this period there were rebellions from the Tantrins and Ekangas whose struggle for power resulted in the long drawn hardships for the people. The queen became a mere spectator. Her choice for the next ruler was firmly opposed by Tantrins who placed Sukhavarman's grandson, Partha (906-921) on the throne against the wishes of the queen. She wanted his father Nirjitavarman to take up the reigns of the government. Being desperate, she left the palace and took shelter at an isolated place at Ushkur in Baramulla. After a period of eight years, the queen's favourite group Ekangas invited the queen back but the rival group of Tantrins captured her and finally executed her. They gave the lease of life to Partha for seven years more when in the year 921, they supported his own father Nirjitavarman who deposed his son and became the king himself. He ruled for two years and his minor son Chakravarman (923-33) ruled under the guardianship of his mother and grandmother. The Tantrins being king makers, then deposed him and placed his half-brother Suravarman I (933-34) in his place. The relatives and ministers had no affection for the king or the people but looked to their own advantage. They caused the overthrow of this king also, for not paying what was due to the Tantrins.[94] The mistress of the previous king, Partha, conciliated the bands of Tantrins and after payment of large money as bribe, restored him to his kingdom in 931. Known for her skilful plottings, the mistress Sambavati built the temple of Shiva called after her own name as Shambeshvara, perhaps modern Sombur.[95] The lust for money and power again made the Tantrins to depose him after a period of only 4 years and in this way the throne of the valley was a priced object and changed hands from one aspirant to another in the next 4 years from 935 to 939. The period from 935 to 939 was the period of utter confusion and anarchy. Chakravarman was again restored on the throne when he promised the Tantrins that he would pay a huge sum to them as a bribe. He could not keep up the promise and left the throne in the same year (935). The kingship was then sold by the Tantrins to the minister, Sambhuvardhana (935-36). Chakravarman took another warring group, Damaras, into confidence and with their help the Tantrins were defeated at Padmapura (Pampor). The king was executed. Chakravarman, thus became the king for the third time (936-37). He was killed by his Domba queen, Shvapika (low caste woman). The throne was then handed over to the wicked son of Partha, Unmattavant (937-39). He was cruel and engaged himself in immoral acts. He died a natural death in 939. However, before his death, he had crowned his spurious son, Survarman II. The young king was consolidating his position when

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the commander-in-chief, Kamalavardhana, made a successful march into the city. The royal troops deserted the king and he was subsequently deposed. Confused by these acts, the Brahmans of the valley assembled on the advice of Kamalavardhana and selected a learned Brahman Yasaskara as the king. He was the son of Prabhakaradeva, former minister and adviser of queen Sugandha. Thus with his accession, in the year 939, the rule of the Utpala dynasty came to an end.

4. Supremacy of Brahmans (939-1003 A.D.)

Yasaskara's rule witnessed restoration of peace and order, suppression of rising power of Tantrins and improvement in trade and agriculture. He always remained obliged to Brahmans. He even told the doorkeepers to come to him only at the time of business saying that they (Brahmans) have given him the throne and had to be worshipped as gods. The king maintained cultural links as against military pursuits with Aryadesha, i.e. India. He constructed a hostel or the monastery for the students coming from other parts of India for acquisition of learning and also bestowed several endowments on Brahmans.[96] A philosophy of 'Pratyabhijna' (recognition) to combat in firm truths of the doctrines of Buddhism was taken up during this time by Somananda. It received further emphasis in the next two centuries by scholars like Utpala, Abhinavagupta, Kshemraja, and Jayaratha (12th century A.D.). In spite of this, Buddhism remained a pioneer field of worship. There were Buddhist scholars also who preached Buddhism through their writings. In 1051, Kshemraja completed the work entitled *Bodhisattva Avaadana Kalpalata* which pertained to noble deeds of Buddha. In his another work *Dasvatavacharita*, Buddha is among the ten incarnations of Vishnu. So Yasaskara's rule was an age of learned scholars—both Buddhist and Shaivite whose writings prompted the students from outside to come over here for study and enlightenment on two diverse philosophies. The people carrying on different professions were all learned whether they were astrologers, doctors, councillors, teachers, ministers, priests, ambassadors, judges or clerks. Towards the close of his reign, he and his queen were subjected to moral degradation. He contracted an abdominal disease and abdicated the throne before his death. First the son of his maternal uncle Ramdeva, Varnata by name was consecrated as king by the ministers, Ekangas and feudal chiefs but he did not visit the dying king and in disgust Yasaskara in his fainting state felt sad. He then placed his own son Samgramadeva on the throne. His minister, Parvagupta was all along waiting for the opportunity and after putting his rivals out of the way, he slew the king and threw his body into the river. He, in 949, after only one year of Yasaskara's abdication, seized the royal power. He also died after one year of his rule and was succeeded by his son Kshemgupta in 950.

By the ill-gotten wealth during his kingship, Parvagupta built a Shiva temple

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named after him as 'Parvagupteshvara' and in the memory of late king Yasaskara, his widow queen completed the construction of a Vishnu temple named as 'Yasaskarasvamin'.

Kshemagupta (950-58) was a weak, reckless and a licentious ruler. The Buddhist establishments were destroyed by him and with the material obtained therefrom, he built a Shiva's shrine of Kshemgaurishvara on the left bank of river Jhelum just at the spot where streamlet 'Dudhaganga'—the river of milk, joins it.[97] The place lies in the outskirts of Srinagar about half a km below Safakahadal bridge. In keeping with the tradition, a shrine dedicated to one of the eight Bhairvas supposed to guard the city and its outskirts was maintained under the name of Bhahukhatheshvara Bhairava. Except a few architectural members, nothing remains of the old shrine. The most notable event of his life was his marriage with Didda—the daughter of Simharaja and the grand daughter of Bhima Shahi—a Brahman king of Kabul. Simharaja was the lord of Lohara (modern Lohrin) in Poonch district which adjoins Kashmir immediately to the south of Pir Panjal range between the Tatakuti peak and Toshmaidan pass. It contained a fortress (ancient Lohara-kotta) which has played a vital role in the history of Kashmir so much so it paved the way for the Lohara family to rule the valley. The marriage, therefore, brought about a unison between the royal dynasties of Kashmir, Lohara and Kabul.

Didda dominated the political scene of the valley for nearly half a century as a chief queen, regent and a ruler. She was energetic, intelligent, deligent and was gifted with statesmanship of high order. She exercised control over her husband which is evident from the coins issued both under the name of the Queen and her husband bearing the legend Di-Kshemagupta(va).[98] The king was known by the humiliating name of Diddakshema.[99] After the death of her husband in the year 958, she in fact ruled behind the curtain as a regent for her minor son Abhimanyu and three grandsons Nandigupta (972-73), Tribhuvana (973-75) and Bhimagupta (975-80). She became a full-fledged sovereign in 980. This was a critical period as she had to face the rebellions of greedy Brahmans, unruly landlords, nobles conspiring with outside forces for dethroning her but she with her diplomatic talent was bold enough to crush them all and thus maintained her autocratic hold over the land. Not a finger was raised against her, when in the year 1003 before her death, she installed her brother's son Udayraja also called Sangramaraja on the throne of Kashmir and transferred the power to Lohara dynasty. Thus the change of power in the royal dynasties took place without shedding a drop of blood.

Despite the State's preoccupation with internal feuds and in repulsion of attacks from Rajauri (modern Rajouri) or other lands, numerous religious shrines were built in accordance with the aspiration of her subjects. As an attribute to the loving memory of her grandfather, she built a Vishnu temple known as Bhimakeshava[100]

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on the left bank of river Liddar in village Bumazuv about 3 kms to the north of sacred springs of Matan on Srinagar-Pahalgam road. Its ceiling of overlapping stones with the uppermost stone carved with a full blown lotus and the pyramidal roof in two tiers are the main architectural arrangements which are found common to the buildings of this period. It is presumed to be of mandapa type, i.e. open on all the sides as we find in similar shrines like the temples at Pandrethan or at Srinagar. It is now the Ziarat of Baba Bamadin Sahib, a converted Hindu saint.[101] To the west is another smaller temple which is now the tomb of Rishi Ruknu-ud-din Sahib. The temple, the larger one, i.e. *Bhimakeshva* temple was embellished with huge quantity of gold, jewels and other valuable objects but it became a bone of contention among the temple priests and finally were confiscated by Harsha (1089-1101)—the last king of the first Lohara dynasty. Queen Didda is credited with the erection of numerous shrines of Vishnu, one in the name of her deceased son Abhimanyu, another in the name of her father called *Simhasvamin* and two in her own name as Diddasvamin.[102] She kept alive the old tradition of partonage to Buddhists. She built monasteries or mathas and a vihara for the abode of Kashmiri students and foreign travellers. The most glaring evidence is of a matha known after her as *Diddamatha*. Nowadays, it is still called as *Diddamar* and the ruins of the structure are still visible on the right bank of the river Jhelum in between the area falling from sixth bridge to seventh bridge. The area is now renamed as *Khan-Kahi Sokhta*. Situated on the high plinth, the outer walls of the building consisting of huge blocks of stones and the long series of steps are even now noticeable.

In fact, her capital town known to us as Diddapura[103] is the entire area situated between sixth and seventh bridge. Here on either side of the river numerous shrines were erected, some of the ruins of which are still existing. In style these are singularly alike, all having small but well-proportioned structures, shrines mostly with four doorways leading to the cells. The walls are laid out of massive blocks of stones but without any carving except the lintels. The main approach to the sanctuaries is from the east by means of a flight of steps leading to a portico having a range of four pillars on each side. One such example is provided by the standing pillars on the base of a high plinth with the entablature at the top. It is on the left bank of the river Jhelum opposite to *Diddamar* locality and at a place known as Watal Kadal. Another matha attributed to the queen was identified on the right bank of the river just opposite to her husband's Shiva temple (Kshemagaurishvara) now housing the tomb of Malik Sahib. The maintenance of the architectural activity in raising Hindu and Buddhist establishments shows the atmosphere of tolerance, created by the rulers of the previous two dynasties, which was adopted by the queen also.

The other religious institutions raised during this century display no marked

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departure from the historically dated temple of Bhimakeshava. The best and the representative illustrations are exemplified in the temples at Pandrethan about 6 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar-Anantnag highway and at Payar about 10 kms from the famous ruins of Avantipura. Both are of Vimana type and each consist of single square chambers. The figures of *Lakulisha*—a form of Shiva has been carved on the doorways which confirms the dedication of both the temples to Shiva. Lakulisha is the founder and systemiser of the *Pashupata* sect (*Epigraphica Indica*, Vol, XXI. pp. 4-8).

The temple of Pandrethan is an enlarged form and displays a perfect type of later development of architecture in the valley. As at Ladou this temple is also situated within the spring. Over the plinth of the temple, string courses of elephants run round which in turn support the walls of the sanctum. The high pitched pyramidal roof is divided into two storeys by an ornamental band. The rigidness of the structure is relieved by placing trefoiled ventilations in the middle of all the four sides which resemble the Chaitya windows of Gandhara belt.[104] On the lintel of the entrance, is the seated figure of Lakulisha who gave a great drive to the pre-existing warship of Shiva. The interior of the cell is plain except for the ceiling which depicts a masterly knowledge of carving. It consists of nine stones arranged in three overlapping courses each of which cuts the angles of the squares below reducing the extent of space to be covered. The entire complex is thus carved into twelve triangles which are exquisitely adorned with flying Yakshas or Gandharvas or Vidyadharas (semi-divine beings) holding garlands, discs and lotus stalks in their hands. The figures in the middle course are shown with floating drapery which has added lustre to the workmanship. The Hellenic craftsmen of Gandhara frequently used garland-bearing flying figures, Gandharvas and Vidyadharas for purposes of decoration. The remarkable artistic perception is displayed on the topmost square slab representing a full-blown lotus with twelve petals enclosed by a beaded circle. This is the only temple where the ceiling shows an impressive architectural and sculptural combination in such a dignified manner.

Smaller than this, the temple of Payar is said to be the most beautiful and an architectural gem.[105] Over the base, the superstructure is built of ten stones only. Only two stones of these compose the two sections of the pyramidal roof divided by an ornamental band. Internally it is hollowed out into a hemispherical dome, the lower edge of which is adorned with the straight-edged fillets and the beaded circle. Here also the central slab is decorated by an expanded lotus. In a marked contrast to the rich plastic treatment of the ceiling at Pandrethan, here only the winged figures, probably Yakshas, support the roof with their outstretched arms and legs. However, this lacuna has been admirably compensated by carving of bulls and pairs of geese with foilated tails. On the capitals and the trefoil space of the door lintels charming

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Shaivaistic sculptures have been carved. The eastern side displays the figure of Lakulisha, seated and cross legged, six-armed dancing Shiva adorns the relief on the western side of the doorway, with the musician and the drummer in the left and right corners of its lower portion. On the northern side is Shiva's sculptural representation in the form of *Gajasura-samharamurti* (killing of the Demon Gajasura—the Elephant demon). The southern relief carries a figure of three-headed Shiva with a female figure in the left corner besides the three other lean figures which may be the devotees. A figure of flying Yaksha is shown over the head of the god and the floral capitals crown the corner pilasters. All these forms have been given secondary position and as already pointed out, the prominent position for the worship as also in the case of Pandrethan was given to linga form of Shiva which is installed on an octagonal base within the sanctum. These two complete examples of 10th century temples display the style of superstructure of the grand structures of the previous periods and left behind an excellent illustration for the erection of such small shrines in the time to come.

Archaeology has brought to light many outstanding sculptural finds attributed to this period which indicate that the artists did not lose the traditional stimulus in producing these. About a dozen stone sculptures, some of which represent four-faced Vishnu with usual attributes and accomplices (personified *Ayudhas*). It measures 0.81 cm × 0.43 cm. Another standing figure of Vishnu measures 0.46 cm × 0.20 cm. Two Vishnu images are seated on Garuda. The other images include Lakshmi, Sheshashayi Vishnu, Mahishasurmardini, Harihara with their vehicles, Garuda and Bull, three-headed Shiva, goddess Yamuna and Ganesha. The image of Ganesha is the smallest among the whole collection. It measures 0.9 cm × 0.7½ cm only. These have been located in a small temple at Dumatbal near Kokarnag in Anantnag district. Similarly, sculptures of Mahishasurmardini and Vaikuntha form of Vishnu belonging to this period have been located at Tengpura in district Pulwama.[106]

In the year 1931, the excavations revealed the base of Vishnu temple (30′ × 30′) at Devsar (ancient Devasarasa)—a village in the south-east of the valley and situated on the upper course of the river Vishoka (Vesau). Besides an extraordinary find exposed here was that of a large frame of brass weighing about 99 ½ kilograms and measures 6′ 2″ long and 4′ 4″ broad. It is rectangular in shape and is oval at the top with the bottom end flattened. It was exhumed at a depth of 9′ below the plinth which has a height of 3′. Its portico measuring 15′ × 11′ is reached by three steps from the ground level. Its border and the central part are adorned with the incarnations of Vishnu including Buddha. On the basis of this unique find (now in S.P.S. Museum) and the main image worshipped in the temple, the excavator named the exposed structure as 'Narasimha Temple'. The depiction of figures in the frame was

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set up in connection with the absorption of Buddhism into Vaishnavite cult of Hindu syncretism.[107] Besides, it gives a sculptural authenticity to the literary and legendary versions of Naga deities. Here at the lowest edges of the frame on either side, Nagas are shown rising from the water supporting the long stalks of lotus which form the thrones of Vishnu images. It has now been said that with one hand raised above, they hold the curling stems of heavenly tree (Kalpavriksha).[108] Association of these with the water here lends support to the myth that the Nagas reside in the lakes or springs in the valley as a result of which they are still being held in high esteem. Whatever the reality behind, these depictions, however, carry Buddhist traditions. A depiction from Shahri Bahlol of the North West Frontier Province (now in Peshawar Museum) shows the Naga elephants supporting the lotus on which Buddha is seated and four tree fairies emerge from the mango canopy which crown Buddha with flower wreath, two with garlands in their hands, and two in the mood of adoration.[109] The 10th also century experienced the erection of Vaishnavite shrines in particular. Buddha's association with the various manifestations of Vishnu and besides on the architectural and stylistic considerations, the temple and the frame can safely be dated to 10th century. The assimilative process of accepting Buddha in the Hindu pantheon is also known from a wonderful bronze sculpture consecrated in the reign of queen Didda. It is the statuette of Bodhisattva Padampani (now in S.P.S Museum, Srinagar) with six arms. Seated on a double lotus, it is elaborately ornamented. A special feature is that it wears a sacred thread in the fashion of Hindu gods. In the attitude of meditation, a seated figure of Dhyani Buddha is shown on his head whereas on either sides of its lotus throne, two goddesses, Tara and Brikuti representing his Shaktis are also shown seated on lotus thrones,[110] though in a reduced scale. An inscription engraved at the base of the stone pedastal mentions its date as 989 which falls during the reign of queen Didda. It also purports the predominance of Brahmanic faith having exercised great influence on the contemporary Buddhist religion.[111]

The small temples with their unmatched sculptural wealth highlight the artistic excellence of the period despite the presence of diverse forces in the valley. The wealth bestowed on these religious institutions through the patronage of the previous kings proved disastrous to the kingdom in the end.

Loharas who succeeded queen Didda were Rajputs and mark now the supremacy of Kshatriya clan which the royal dignatories were proud of.[112]

5. First Lohara Dynasty (1003-1101 A.D.)

Sangramaraja (1003-28), the first ruler of the dynasty was timid and stupid. The political scene continued to be confused as before. Short reigns, murders, suicides and enmity among royal families were order of the day. With the ascendency of

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Kshatriyas to the throne, the Brahmans were hurt. Sangramaraja added fuel to it when he married his daughter to a Brahman, the Superintendent of *Diddamatha* who possessed wealth, courage and other good qualities. The Brahmns felt that the princess was not a fit match for the priest or the Brahman no matter how rich he was, because of his living on temple presents donated by the people. Such evil designs proved dangerous in the long run and harmed the unity and the integration of the country. Outside the valley, the Brahmans received a set back with the extinction of Hindu Shahi kingdom in north-west India as a result of invasions by Mahmud of Ghaznavi. He attempted to conquer Kashmir twice but did not succeed. Even after the death of king's powerful minister, Tunga, entrusted to him by his mother Didda before her death, the things did not improve. He handed over the power to worthless officials. The slackness in administration, rebel groups like Darads, Diviras (clerks) and Damaras got predominance. The king was further shocked at the licentious character of his queen and breathed his last in the month of June in 1028. He was succeeded by his son Hariraja. The young king died only after a brief period of twenty-two days and it was reported that the licentious queen-mother had used witchcraft against him in order to get the throne for herself.[113] But all her hopes were dashed to the ground by the king's milk brother, Sagara, who with the support of Ekangas made her second child, a son to occupy the throne. Being a minor the new king, Ananta (1028-63) faced many hardships in the beginning. The first in the series was the intrigue of his own mother who for the pleasures connected with the kingship forgot the love for the child, but somehow she later on reconciled on the defeat of the child-king's old maternal uncle, Vigraharaja—the ruler of Lohara who had invaded the valley to obtain the throne. By this time, the child-king came of age, he was addicted to extravagance and other vices. This was mainly due to growing influence of Shahi princes who were driven from their original home following their rout at the hands of Mahmud of Ghazni. He even married the sister-in-law of one of the princes—Rudrapala who was most dear to the king. They exhausted the treasury by drawing large salaries.[114] At that time, the powerful commander-in-chief Tribhuvana supported by Damaras appeared on the scene to deprive the king of the throne but was defeated. So also the Darad ruler Achalamangala along with other Muhammadan chiefs probably from Chilas and Astor (converted Hindu princes) also invaded but the king with the active participation in the battle of Rudrapala—his favourite Shahi prince, the invaders were defeated. He then repulsed the rebellion of his own brother, Udayanavatsa and also pacified the Brahmans who in order to meet their demands had resorted to fasting.

With such measures and more so by the disappearance of Shahi princes from the scene, the valley was subjected to calm and peace. The king and his queen Suryamati began to take pleasure in leading the virtuous life. The queen built two

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Shiva temples of *Gaurishvara* and *Sadashiva* and arranged for the provision of Shiva's emblem, i.e. trident and other small lingas (Banalingas) for the shrines. The temples were built on the bank of river Vitasta in the heart of the city. Two convents or monasteries were built, one on the bank of the river Jhelum near the temple of *Gaurishvara* and the other near the ancient temple of Vijayeshvara. Two more mathas or convents were founded in the name of her brother and her husband. To please the Brahmans she bestowed villages for the upkeep of the temples and made many gifts in the form of cows, gold, horses, jewels and other presents.[115] The king was again made to indulge in great extravagance by a foreigner, Padamraja. He acted as an agent of Kashmir to king Bhoja of Malwa (a contemporary of king Ananta). King Bhoja himself was a luxurious person and is said to have sent heaps of gold for construction of the tank round the sacred spring of Kapateshvara (modern Kothier) about three kms above the famous garden of Achhabal in district Anantnag. The spring in ancient times was called as 'Papasudana' Tirtha since its waters had the healing powers. It was also named as Kapateshvara since lord Shiva had appeared here under the disguise (Kapata) of pieces of wood seen floating in the water.[116] An image of Shiva in sandalwood appeared when the water of the spring subsided.[117] Having heard about the great powers of the spring, king Bhoja had vowed that he would wash his face always from the waters of this spring and the broker Padamraja is said to have fulfilled his difficult vow by regularly sending large numbers of glass jars filled with water to him. The locality has yielded large number of ancient glass fragments on the road that leads to the spring from the village of Kothier which confirmed the existence of flourishing glass industry here.[118] Here the enclosure wall with two staircases laid down in opposite directions is flanked by side walls surmounted by projections. This is a usual feature with the Kashmiri temples. Associated with the wall were two small temples without any surroundings, or any sculptural motifs. Both were single chambered shrines but the larger one of the two had niches on its three sides externally which are exceptionally smaller as compared to the entrance of the temple on the south-west side.

In other temples such recesses are of the same dimensions as the open doorway. This accounts for its date later than 10th century. The long stretch of wall on further probing turned to be a cellular peristyle which once surrounded the complex of temples here. In the process many miniature temples were also found which also resemble the two temples found earlier. However, the existence of cellular quadrangle definitely leads to the conclusion that it is an earlier structure which is confirmed by the stratigraphical evidence reported by the excavator that there was an older layer of the buildings also upon which the present structures were built. The religious sanctity of the shrine at Kothier was maintained during the Sultanate

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period as well. It was repaired by Sultan Shihab-ud-Din (A.D. 1355-73). This is evident from an inscription on a stone slab obtained here. It bears Lakulisha era which corresponds to 1369.[119] As expected, the foreigner who used to bring betel leaves with ingredients into the valley from outside, exhausted the State revenue so much that the king's diadem resplendent with jewels had to be kept as a security for the payment of the amount due to him. The queen then put an end to such a disgrace by handing over to him the savings of her own treasury and took over the reigns of the government herself. She overhauled the administration and with the support of her newly selected Prime Minister, a Vaishya by caste named Haladhara, the son of the watchman at the temple of Gaurishvara built by her, a period of peace and prosperity dawned once again. The uprising of Damaras and that of Khasas was also suppressed. The king being secure at home took up the foreign expeditions without any plan in which he got both successes and failures with the result that there was again a lot of confusion and disorder. On the advice of queen, the king abdicated the throne in favour of his son Kalasha in 1063. This hasty step was soon after regretted and the king had to resume the authority once more leaving Kalasha a king in name only. In all assemblies, worship ceremonies of weapons or at other royal functions, Kalasha merely attended like an assistant as if he was his father's purohit.[120] At this time an important event that took place was the crowning of Kalasha's son Utkarsha as the king of Lohara following the renunciation of worldly affairs by the ruler of that country, Kshitiraja, who did not like his son Bhuvanaraja to succeed him because of his vicious character. This succession, however, was of great significance since both the kingdoms of Lohara and Kashmir came under one rule when in the year 1089, Utkarsha succeeded to the throne of Kashmir as well.

Disgusted with the growing licentious character of Kalasha, the old king and his queen left with treasuries for Vijayeshvara shrine at Bijibehara. Still the relations between the king and his old parents did not improve and Ananta summoned Kalasha's eldest son Harsha to his place of stay at Bijibehara so as to impose him on the throne. This family feud between the royal family induced the Brahmans to resort to hunger strike which resulted in harmony between king Kalasha and his parents. This did not last long. In order to get the wealth taken by his father to Vijayeshvara, he set it on fire. Even after that, the king was planning to send his parents into exile, which prompted the old king (Ananta) to commit suicide. The queen was also struck with remorse and leapt into the flaming fire of her deceased husband and thus became a *Sati*. There was general resentment in the hearts of the people about the tragic death of the royal parents and now to win over their hearts, Kalasha changed his earlier way of life. He made some rich endowments. He reconciled with his elder son Harsha who was still at Vijayeshvara even after the tragic end of his grandparents. He rebuilt the town and Shiva's temple at Vijayeshvara

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which he had burnt down, and decorated the shrine with golden parasol. Even other shrines of earlier date were also decorated with golden *Amalakas*—flat fluted melon shaped members usually at the summit. Placing of the *Amalaka* is a constant and a very ancient feature of the Indian art. Later the fluted treatment of this motif is identified in many architectural features of the chaitya, vihara and temple.[121] In Kashmir, this feature is still found in Payar temple. On the foreign affairs, he could assert the old suzerainty over Rajauri (Rajouri). Not only this, he played a prominent role towards the domination of the hill states around Kashmir. The best illustration of this event is that in the winter of 1087-88, the rulers of eight hill states assembled in the capital. This assemblage indicated the influence of the king among the surrounding hill territories around Kashmir which among others included the ruler of Lohara who was his own second son, Utkarsha. But the enmity between his eldest son and himself took a severe turn when the former, prince Harsha was arrested. Irritated by the conduct of Harsha, he reverted to his old licentious life and did not spare even his son's wives. The worst change in his character is known when he melted the copper images of Surya and also the brass images of Buddha or Bodhisattvas from the viharas. Quite disheartened in the end, he died in 1089, but before that instead of Harsha—the eldest son, he crowned his second son Utkarsha.

Utkarsha continued with the policy of his father in keeping his brother Harsha in a more guarded prison though the court and the people longed for his rise to power. The plot was hatched by the members of royal family and the rebel Damaras and in order to reach a reconciliation with the rebels, Harsha was released and took forcibly the royal power. Utkarsha was imprisoned where he ended his life.

Harsha (1089-1101) was a remarkable figure. He was youthful and possessed great personal beauty. He was an expert linguist, a poet and person of high education. He was a lover of music and was liberal to all the bands of singers. He showed special favours to the learned and adorned men of learning. He was liberal but greedy also, kind hearted but cruel also, violent but indolent and thus his chequered life was an embodiment of contrasts.

In the beginning Harsha showed prudence and resourcefulness in retaining the trusted officials and servants of his father ignoring their former conduct towards himself. His generosity towards men of learning and letters made even Bilhana the court poet of Chalukya king of Karnata, Parmadi, regret that he had left Kashmir during the reign of Kalasha. Bilhana was the resident of village Khonamusa (modern Khonmoh) about 5 kms north-north west of Pampor and the author of *Vikramankadevacharita*—the historical poem of his fellow-countrymen. Still his love for learning resulted in close contacts with Karnata (modern Karnataka) and he introduced coin types which were copied from there and were quite different from the whole of the Hindu coinage of Kashmir.[122] He also introduced new fashions in

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dress and ornaments. The king passed his nights in the assembly hall which was illuminated by a thousand lamps and attended by lovely ladies, learned men, musicians, dancers and ministers clad in brilliant dresses and wearing golden ornaments. As compared to copper, the use of gold and silver money was plentiful in the land. Quite likely these highly finished fashions of dress and use of golden ornaments, currency or the coinage was because of the growing Muslim influence but in any case it points to better economic conditions and prosperity of the people of the valley during the early part of king Harsha's reign. It was in this period that the ruler of Rajapuri was forced to pay tribute.

The valley was not destined to continue with such a golden era any more. Again there was the same restless energy both physical and mental and the same outbursts of factiousness as witnessed earlier. The spirit of treachery kindled in the minds of those who were nearer to the throne. The wrong advice given to the king by self-interested councillors of the court hastened his downfall. He banished his faithful officer Kandarpa by name who had earlier defeated the lord of Rajapuri and got king's authority over that territory asserted. This was followed by a conspiracy hatched up first by his brother General Vijayamalla and then by his half-brother born from a concubine of Kalasha-Jayaraja and his own relative Dhammata but he was successful in executing or killing them. He also secretly executed the elder of the two sons of Utkarsha and thus uprooted his own family. The king's mind was highly perverted by such sinful actions and became an easy prey to the wrongful judgements of his courtmen. Anti-religious feelings were roused in him. The royal treasury had already been impoverished because of lavish expenditure on his personal luxuries. The need for money turned the liberal king into a cruel oppressor. He deprived Bhimakeshava temple on the bank of Liddar river of the hoarded wealth which included gold, jewels and other valuables. Being addicted to extravagant expenditure on various sections of troops and on himself, he plunderded the wonderful and costly treasures from all the temples which former kings had bestowed on them. The divine images barring two statues of Buddha, one at Parihasapura and the other at Srinagar and also those housed in the temple of Martanda, were all despoiled. The king was in possession of enormous wealth acquired by his grand-father and father, who had brought it from Lohara at the commencement of his reign and finally by confiscation of temple wealth but still he appointed officials to raise taxes in order to secure more wealth. He did not even spare 'night soil' for which he appointed a separate prefect to raise revenue.

Night soil serves as a manure for better production of vegetables in the valley even now. Having acquired wealth from such evil sources, he lost his balance of mind. He became a most licentious person. He even amused with his father's wives who had brought him up. The worst type of degeneration in Harsha's character gave

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undue power to his worthless officials. This was the cause of general discontentment both at home and foreign fronts. His expedition to Rajapuri turned a failure because his own Police Officer, Sunna was bribed.[123] He then took measures to siege the fort of Dugdhaghata (modern Dudakut) which guarded the pass leading to the Darad territory of the Kishenganga valley. Again the operations were not successful even though uncommon courage and bravery was shown by his two brother princes—Ucchala and Sussala who belonged to collateral branch of Lohara dynasty. In the year 1099-1100, the valley witnessed series of calamities. In broad daylight robbers killed the people. A golden bowl was stolen even from the king's apartment. The villages were flooded by an inundation which was followed by a famine and plague. The streams were filled with corpses and in this way much of the population was wiped off. Taking advantage of the chaotic conditions, the Damaras entered the valley for loot and plunder but a section of these were suppressed.

As was natural, the people by and large were fed up with the behaviour of the king and wanted to have the kingship bestowed on the energetic princes—Ucchala and Sussala. Harsha, forgetting their heroism in the expedition of Dugdhaghata, got suspicious and on the advice of his parasites decided to get rid of them by killing them. The evil design of the king was conveyed to the princes by a courtesan, Thakkana, who had connections with them. Both the brothers then left the valley, one proceeded to Rajapuri and the other to another hilly state of Kalinjara, south of Kashmir. After some time, the two brothers joined by Damaras and other hilly rebel groups—Khashas, entered Srinagar. Harsha in despair killed, in a most brutal way, the father of the two rebel princes who was leading the life of a recluse. This infuriated the sons and they burnt the palace and killed Bhoja, the son and heir apparent, of Harsha. In his grief on the death of his son, he took shelter in a mendicant's hut. After being located there, he was ruthlessly killed at the age of forty-two years in 1101. Deserted by his servants and without a family, this sovereign of the land was burnt naked like a pauper by a wood-dealer. With his death came the end of his dynasty.

The political and social atmosphere of the country was incongruous and uncongenial to the historical setting. The period witnessed decline in the moral values of the society, and in order to acquire material gain, intrigues, treachery and other degraded measures were adopted by the courtiers, police and military officers, officials of the State, queens, princes and kings. When the society gets deteriorated, dissatisfaction comes which is replaced by quick changes at the helm of affairs. Even under such trying circumstances, cultural life which had shown its flowering maturity in the past continued to enrich itself in one way or the other. In the beginning of 11th century, a highly proficient writer, Abhinavagupta had produced

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gigantic volumes on Shaiva philosophy. There was a remarkable development of human mind resulting in the works of some of the greatest of the world's creative artists like Bilhana, Mahimabhatta and his preceptor Shyamala, Kshemraja or Kshemendra. Kshemendra who flourished in the middle of the 11th century wrote a number of works on Kashmir Shaivism. Side by side, he has given a vivid picture of different aspects of the vicious circle of public life. In his original poem, *Samayamatrka*, he has depicted the moral delinquency prevailing in contemporary Kashmir.[124] In his other works *Desopadesa* and *Narmamala*, he has written at length on the involvement of debt by chewing the betel leaves, of Shaiva teachers of loose moral character, of willy merchants, cheats, marriages of young girls with old men, naked scenes of sensual pleasures and such other degraded sections of the society.[125] Some of the portions in his work entitled *Lokaprakasha* present Sanskrit as the official language in which both Persian and Arabic words have been used representing the medium of correspondence by the official classes of Kashmir during the dwindling period of Hindu rule.[126] This points to the irresistible Muhammadan influence in the valley.

Along with the literary advancement, religious establishments, though on a very minor scale, were also erected to keep up the tradition of spiritual fervour or more likely to overshadow the sinful actions of the builder. Literary pursuits and building activities are complementary to each other and their interdependence is unavoidable.

The religious buildings of the period are of modest dimensions and with restrained decorations. The artists were mostly deprived of patronage from the licentious rulers and greedy ministers. They were, obviously on the run and concentrated outside the present borders of Kashmir. The architectural treatment of the structural foundations in those regions is clearly illustrated by the style influenced by that of Kashmir.[127] The standing monuments of the period lack the fine moulded examples of the previous structures and indicate plainly that by this time much of the fine spirit of the artistic movement had gone out of the valley. The entrance to the shrine sanctum which was generally square was of striking production. Much artistic emphasis was attached to the doorways both in the case of those at the entrance to the building and also those leading to the inner shrine. The best example of this style is illustrated in the cave temple at village Bumazuv at a distance of 30′ to the west of the temple of Bhima Shahi, now the Ziarat of Baba Bamdin Sahib. The main entrance to the shrine consists of trefoiled arched doorway surmounted by a pediment, a small rectangular niche carved on its left wall, floral scroll on the plasters, and its lintel is decorated with the carvings of rosettes and the intervening space filled with minutely carved human figures of unusually small size. The main shrine is at the rear of the cave when one enters through this ornamented doorway.

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The shrine is square externally and rests on a high basement of 4′ 6″ in height. The corner pilasters carry two rectangular niches but the provision of slight projection of the porch shows a decadent example of Kashmir architecture.[128] The structure, is no doubt, the latest specimen of the Kashmir Hindu architecture.[129] Similarly associated with this period could be bracketed the Buddhist stupa at Malangpura. Situated at a distance of 34 kms south-east of Srinagar, it lies halfway between Avantipur and Payar. The stupa is square with two projections on either side and the stairs each facing to cardinal points. The interesting feature of the structure is that the flanking walls of the stairs are relieved with the scene depicting the mortal pursuit of a man by a fabulous hybrid animal with a beak, horns and wings.[130]

These are some of the typical examples which reflect the declining trend of the architectural movement which once flourished in the valley and was never revived even in the last lap of the Hindu period which followed.

6. Second Lohara Dynasty (1101-1171 A.D.)

Ucchala who occupied the throne after Harsha's death hardly for a decade (1101-1111) was the fourth direct descendant of Kantiraja, the brother of queen Didda and the uncle of Samgramraja—the first ruler of the first Lohara Dynasty. Ucchala remained in danger because of high handedness of Damaras who had helped him in securing the throne. In the beginning he had to face many difficulties. He had troublesome Damaras, ministers and feudatories as robbers and his own brother—a strong pretender to the throne. In the first instance he could silence the two groups of Damaras led by Janakachandra and Bhimadeva by adopting 'Divide and Rule' policy. The result was that an ill-feeling arose in the mind of Bhimdeva against Janakachandra and ultimately a violent follower of the former killed Janakachandra. This event bore favourable results for the time being. He then sent his brother to rule over the kingdom of Lohara independently.

Ucchala then paid his personal attention towards the reorganisation of the administration. He saw that the corrupt officials (Kayasthas as they were called) were punished. He, unlike his predecessors, thought that the protection of the people was the sacred duty of the king. He was ever anxious to help the weak and everywhere the citizens were strong while the officials were lacking in strength. On hearing the trouble of the people, he would leave his other occupations and see that their distress is relieved in the same manner as the father relieves the trouble of his son. At times he performed the duties of a judge. In the process, he caused resentment among the officials by discussing openly their conduct, and suppressed them through degradation, dismissal and even imprisonment. The result was that they got humiliated and did not stand by the side of the king when he was in trouble.

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Ucchala restored the whole town of Nandiksetra (localized spot below the foothills of Mount Haramukhta) and the buildings which had been burnt down. So was the case with ancient site of Chakradhara (Bijibehara) and continued with the spirit of restoring the decayed buildings. Even at Parihasapura, he installed a fresh image of Vishnu—Parihasakeshava which was carried off earlier by Harsha.

Not much time had passed when his own brother who was in possession of the kingly pleasures in his kingdom at Lohara suddenly invaded the valley to oust his elder brother but was driven off to take refuge in the Darad territory, he then reoccupied his own kingdom of Lohara with great difficulties. The next pretender to the throne was Bhoja, son of Kalasha, the former king of Kashmir but the king again thwarted this attempt and finally he was killed. Bhoja's son, Bhikshachara remained in the apartment of queen Jayamati but the king got suspicious that he might be a source of danger when he comes of age. He ordered him to be executed. He was bound with the stones and thrown into Jhelum river. But as fate willed, he regained consciousness when rescued by a compassionate Brahmani and then handed over to Asmati, his relative. Asmati was the elder sister of queen Suryamati and was called out of respect, the Shahi princess Didda. The boy was taken secretly to the southern country of Malava which was at that time ruled by Naravarman (1104-5). This king who was aware of the story, trained him in arms and taught him other sciences like his own son. The prince, it is recorded, grew up at Malava but for the ruin of the people of Kashmir at later stages.

A sort of reconciliation was brought between the two brothers at this time when a son was born to Sussala who was named Jayasimha (lion of victory) —the future king of Kashmir during 1128-55. Thus while measures were being taken to bring peace to the land, the disgruntled officers among whom the prefect of the city Chudda and his brother Radda were prominent engineered a plot to kill the king and get rid of him. They were joined by the household intriguer Sadda and other officials alienated by the king. The conspirators then attacked the king on the night of December 8 in 1111 while he was in his palace. The king fought in desperation but was finally overpowered by numerous assailants and killed.

Radda, one of the conspirators ascended the throne assuming the name of Sankharaja but in the next morning was removed and killed along with his fellow conspirators by a powerful Damara chief, Gargachandra who happened to be the supporter of the late king. On this occasion, Gargachandra showed his noble character in not accepting the throne though he was requested by all. Salhana—half-brother of Ucchala was quickly consecrated as king. Lamenting over the change-over of the kings at short intervals, the historian of the time Kalhana, recorded that royal attendants served in the evening king Ucchala, in the morning Radda and at mid-day Salhana.[131] The late king's brother Sussala on hearing about the death of

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his brother quickly marched towards the valley to assert his claim but was opposed by Gargachandra's troops. With great difficulty, he returned to his kingdom of Lohara.

King Salhana (1111-12) was a mere puppet in the hands of Gargachandra whose authority was unquestionable. Sometime after the rival group on the instance of the king, attacked him. No harm was done to Gargachandra and instead the king earned his displeasure. The result was that king Sussala was invited from Lohara and without any marked resistance, he broke into the barricaded palace and took Salhana, reigning king of Kashmir for three months and twenty seven days, as prisoner and ascended the throne by the end of April 1112.

It was not a crown of roses for Sussala (1112-20). In the beginning he was firm in his policy and exterminated the families of those who had betrayed his brother by searching them one by one and did not spare even children. He was also greedy but not liberal. He appointed such officers whose honesty had been tested at the death of his brother and were given free hand to raise the revenue. No doubt his treasury was benefited but in the process, due to oppression, the subjects were dissatisfied.

During the short period of ease, he built three temples at the bank of river Jhelum and also renovated the vihara of queen Didda which had earlier been burnt down by a sudden conflagration.

Growing predominance of Gargachandra was worrying him. He joined hands with his arch enemy, Damara chief of Lohara (modern Lar), Mallakostha. In the end, Gargachandra was imprisoned and strangled at night by ropes along with his three sons till they breathed their last. Their bodies were thrown into the water. In the same year of 1118, again a serious trouble started for the king.

The main contender for the throne Bhikshachara who had made an attempt for the occupation of the throne earlier, was this time invited by Somapala, chief of Rajapuri. Ill-advised as he was, the king led an expedition against Rajapuri. Though he kept the territory under his subjugation for seven months, he could not instal Somapala's brother and rival on the throne. The military expedition which bore no fruit resulted in huge expenditure and the king was forced to increase the taxes. There was general Damara rising including those of Lohara region. They were joined by top ranking military officers who were alienated by the king. The condition of the State further worsened by ill-disposed Brahmans who undertook a solemn fast urging the king to take action against the indifferent ministers who were not serious in fighting on the king's side. To conciliate them, many unwanted decisions were taken. There was revolt in the army. The king lost his confidence on his own relatives too who also were bent upon treason. The prevailing circumstances made the king slip away from his palace in November 1120 and by bribing

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the Damaras and other dangerous opponents on the road, he had a safe passage and reached Lohara with few of his loyal attendants. Mallakostha and other friends made a common cause with the troops which enabled Bhikshachara to have a triumphant entry into the city. Thus ended the first phase of Sussala's reign.

Bhikshachara (1120-21) of Harsha's lineage occupied the vacant throne on the next day of Sussala's departure. Damara chief Mallakostha became his instructor in all affairs. Himself he was inexperienced and sensual by nature. To browbeat Sussala he sent an army to Lohara in which he was assisted by the chief of Rajapuri, Somapala and a 'Turuska' (Muhammadans) force under Sallara (Persian title Sardar or commander-in-chief) Vismaya, probably Muhammadan chief of the lower hills. The combined forces were defeated on the bank of Vitola (identified with Bitrah river) which joins the Tohi (Tausi) at the town of Prunts (Poonch). Many of the defeated soldiers joined Sussala's camps. There was dissension among Bhikshachara's supporters also. The Brahman and purohit corporations too expressed their resentment against the ruling king and eagerly awaited the return of the former king. Sussala now being convinced of the deteriorating condition of the king on his home front, entered the valley unexpectedly without any opposition from the king. Thus after an absence of six months and twelve days, in the month of May 1121, Sussala took over the reigns of the government again and Bhikshachara quietly left and took refuge in the village of Pusyananda, a territory of Rajapuri. With the restoration of Sussala, begins the second phase of his reign (1121-1128).

Sussala even now had no peaceful time. The main threat came from Bhikshachara who supported by the king of Rajapuri and other Damara chiefs made incessant attacks on the valley. The first inroad was made at Vijayeshvara (Bijibehara) and in desperation burnt down the famous temple of Chakradhara where inhabitants from that place and other towns had taken refuge. He thus mercilessly caused the destruction of multitude of people. In the early part of 1122, again an unsuccessful attempt was made by Bhikshachara at the bank of Gambhira (the deep river) to gain the throne. This particular spot was known by the name of Gambhira-Sangama on the united course of two rivers, Vesau (ancient Vishoka) fed with the waters of lower course of Rembiara or Rembyar (ancient Ramanyatavi) and Vitasta. It fell enroute to Srinagar from Vijayeshvara and happened to be of great importance from the military point of view.

In the spring of 1123, another attempt was made on the capital itself. The Damaras, the supporters of Bhikshachara set fire to a thickly populated portion of the city between present Shergari to Habba Kadal area which instantaneously set the whole city on fire. Within an instant the entire city gave a deserted look. Except the colossal statue of Buddha (Bradbuddha) which had earlier been spared from the

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wrath of Harsha (1089-1101) nothing was visible. Even this image was blackened by smoke. Finally the assault led to the defeat of Bhikshachara on the hill of Shankaracharya in Srinagar. The great fire had consumed all the food stores. It resulted in a terrible famine which affected the whole land. The road to the village from where the fresh crops could have been obtained were blocked by the Damaras. Many people lost their lives and the surviving ones were so weak that they could scarcely walk. Their emaciated bodies looked darkened.

King Sussala was disheartened by these calamities and the final stage of misfortune came in the wake of his favourite queen Meghamanjari's death. He crowned his son Jayasimha on 15th of June 1123. After some time, Sussala changed his mind and retained the government in his own hands and Jayasimha was merely a ruler in appearance only. Many Damaras were subdued.

Sussala knew that the main trouble for him or for his eldest son was Bhikshachara and in order to get rid of him, he hatched a plan to kill him with the knowledge of conspirator Utpala, who instead killed the king when he was unguarded. Thus came to an end the second turn of king Sussala's reign.

Jayasimha (1128-55) lamented the death of his father whom he loved very much. He reproached his father's ministers who were sitting by his side mute from shame and fear. He expressed his sorrow that they could not save the life of his father who had honoured them with riches. Still in that agony he appointed guardians who were fully prepared for keeping proper watch and ward over the treasury and other places of importance. He knew that his throne was surrounded by troubles both at home and abroad. Instead of taking offensive measures, he proclaimed an amnesty for all including those who had joined the enemy and were guilty. This unexceptionable course was a complete departure from the procedure followed by the preceding kings but he was instantly rewarded. He got the support of the Damaras and other rebel groups. The citizens at large were also moved and shouted blessings for him. Most of the Damara chiefs were won over by his able chief adviser Lakshmaka by bribes.

The main trouble came from the arch enemy of his family and still the active pretender to the throne in the person of Bhikshachara. He made a series of attempts for the capture of the throne but because of the king's statesmanship, the intruder was not in a position to make any headway. The king received support in this venture from his high officials, Damara and Khasa chiefs. Bhikshachara was eventually captured in the castle of Bansala at the southern foot of the Banihal pass and finally killed in the spring of 1130.

Soon after that, Lothana, a new rival for the throne appeared. He was the surviving brother of Salhana who had been released from the Lohara castle as a result of a conspiracy hatched by the officials in charge of the castle. He marched towards

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the palace and crowned himself as the king of Lohara and was in no time in possession of the treasures which Sussala had hoarded there. Jayasimha visualised the result of the loss of the family stronghold and under the guidance of his chief adviser, Lakshmaka sent a large army but was made to retreat. Even on the return journey, thousands of Jayasimha's men died and Lakshmaka was captured and subsequently let off against the payment of huge sum of money. Besides, Lothana also got disinterested in the royal fortune because of the death of his only son Dilha and his beloved wife Malla. Lakshmaka on his arrival in Srinagar was received by the people with affection since they thought that the king had recovered his luck by his return. He resumed his fomer position in the king's court. On the other hand, Lothana was not destined to rule Lohara for long. A plot was hatched in his court which deprived him of the crown and Sussala's son from a concubine and as such half brother of Jayasimha—Mallarjuna was crowned as the king of Lohara in 1131. The young king was most extravagant. He wasted money on sensual pleasures and fostered courtesans, rogues and parasites. Jayasimha sent troops to Lohara and in fear he agreed to pay tribute to the king of Kashmir. But his position at Lohara was made precarious by the constant attack of the deposed king and his uncle Lothana who was supported by the powerful Damara chief Koshtheshvara. Here also Jayasimha's diplomacy came to his rescue. He won over Koshtheshvara and sent the force under Sujji—one time king's commander-in-chief and subsequently the chief minister of Lothana. The king of Kashmir had already received him on his side and reinstated him in office only to retake Lohara. Mallarjuna harassed by internal dissentions could not offer resistance and left the castle and marched off with treasures towards Rajapuri. He was ultimately imprisoned in 1135. The same fate awaited Koshtheshvara too. So for Sujji was concerned, the king came to know about his injudicious character and had him treacherously killed with his relatives and followers.

Jayasimha appointed a man of humble position, Sringara as his prime minister. He did not turn the riches to evil use and his gifts went to worthy persons. The effective measures adopted by him brought about a period of rest for the strife-torn valley. At this time a great intriguer and an official Brahman Shivaratha who was earlier imprisoned by king's men, was now put to death by strangulation. Having thus removed the obstructions of enemies, the king was bent upon doing good to the people and lead the country to prosperity. He performed sacrifices and paid great sums to the priests. He attended the marriages, pilgrimages and other festivals where he brought about happiness to the parties concerned by his presence and presents. During his time learned men of great eminence like Kalhana and Mankha, the authors of historical text—*Rajatarangini* and well-known *Shrikantacharita* respectively, lived. Other contemporary scholars were Jalhana, Ruyyaka, Manik-

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yachandra etc.[132] For all these men of learning he constructed houses with high terraces and offered them all the facilities. Besides the scholars, he bestowed gifts Brahmans, helpless people and householders who deserved them.

The religious edifices had suffered much because of continued turmoil, rampant intrigues, dissensions and civil wars at intervals. He gave special attention to restoration of these foundations. In addition, he, his queen Ratnadevi and ministers laid the foundations of numerous *viharas*, *mathas* and temples. Gardens and tanks of public utility and benefit were also laid out. By dint of his pious actions, he turned to be a firm and able administrator, a liberal patron of art and letters and a great builder of religious edifices. For the first time Kalhana has referred to the enlightenment (*bodhi*) of Buddha and claims that king Jayasimha possessed the virtue of that enlightenment.[133] The valley of Kashmir which in the words of Kalhana, who was an eyewitness to the happenings of the reign of Jayasimha, was like a deserted forest and the king restored it with wealth, population and habitation. The people never felt the scarcity of food even when the rice crop was destroyed by premature snowfall, floods and other calamities.

Assured of economic stability at home, Jayasimha maintained friendly relations with other kingdoms.

The peaceful times were soon disturbed by the death of Yashodhara, the ruler of Darads who was greatly attached to Jayasimha. Yashodhara's own minister Viddasiha occupied the throne through unfair means and this prompted king Jayasimha to extend his control over that territory as well. This on the other hand infuriated Viddasiha who incited the old pretender for the throne of Kashmir—Lothana, to take over power in the valley. In this adventure, he was encouraged by the powerful Damara chief of Karnav (ancient Karnadha) modern Karnah in Kishanganga valley, Alamkarachakra and was also joined by Bhoja—the son of Salhana and Vigraharaja—a half brother of the king. The royal army encircled the rebels in the castle of Sirahsila—a castle near the ancient shrine of Kishanganga Sharada in Kishanganga valley. The Damara chief of the territory, Alamkarachakra was hard pressed and offered peace by surrendering Lothana and Vigraharaja into the hands of Jayasimha in February 1144. Bhoja managed to escape from the camp of Alamkarachakra and supported by Rajavadhana, a disgruntled but influencial officer of the king, he rose in an open rebellion against the king. Again the claimant for the throne was further encouraged by other powerful Damaras, Viddasiha and other Muslim chiefs of the valleys adjoining the Himalayas. The commander of royal forces Rilhana and Sasthachandra (son of Gargachandra, powerful Damara of Lar region) were successful in defeating the combined forces of the rebels who lost the courage to stand up again and took to flight. There were again threats of Damara risings which finally collapsed after Bhoja surrendered himself in the court of

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Jayasimha through the mediation of his chief queen Kalhanika in 1145. The king treated Bhoja kindly and he too gave greater pleasure to the judicious king by his conduct than even his sons.

Rajavadana wishing to raise a rebellion again was killed in a fight by secretly posted braves of Jayasimha. The same fate awaited Lothana and other Damara chiefs.

With the extermination of the enemies and strong claimants of the throne, stability and unity was once again witnessed in the valley. He coronated his eldest son, Gulhana who was still a child, as the ruler of Lohara. The years 1149-50 were very peaceful. The king, his relatives, queens and other highups devoted themselves to laying the pious foundations of many temples, mathas and viharas. In the long list of these shrines, the only temple that stands identified is the small temple of Shiva at the hill side of the village Mamal close to the famous health resort of Pahalgam. The temple was designated as Mammeshvara and the linga worshipped in the shrine was designated as Mammeshvara and the village as Mamalaka. As usual it is square inside and the porch rested on two fluted columns. The corner pilasters are devoid of any projection. The walls are straight and simple without any ornamentation and obviously depict the declining period of the Hindu art in the valley. The water of the spring is enclosed in a basin in front of the temple. However, the temple and the spring water carried great religious attachment as these were visited by the pilgrims on their pilgrimage to the holy cave of Amareshvara (Amarnath), and this popularity of the shrine must have induced the king Jayasimha to adorn it with a golden *Amalaka* or Kalasha (finial).[134] The king also laid out a garden at another holy place of Somatirtha, the present Somyar Ghat below the second bridge on the right bank of river Jhelum within the Srinagar city. Even now it is presumed that a path taken on the 15th of the dark fortnight if and when it takes place on Monday, relieves the devotee of the sins. Another typical example of the style is a still smaller temple of Shiva at village Garur 50 kms from Srinagar in tehsil Bandipora, district Baramulla. The variation marked at the shrine is the absence of trefoil niches. The temple here also stands on the bank of a spring. In a similar situation and on the same pattern is a temple at village Naranthal about 2 kms below Baramulla on the right bank of river Jhelum. It is built of plain slate stones and stone tenon was placed at the top of the shrine for holding the finial. At Halsidar on Verinag-Kapran road, a plinth of simple stone blocks of temple were located.[135] A similar plinth of a Vishnu temple of a much more smaller size was found to have been raised against a monolithic stone at Raithan in Badgam district. The clearance of the spring near it has yielded numerous fragmentary sculptures among which the images of Chaturanan Vishnu are predominant.[136] These lacked lustre, beauty and grace or the skill that was perceived on the sculptures of Karkotas

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or Utpalas. Both the architectural and sculptural representations now mark the changing character of the art and imply the decay of the once glorious architectural treatment and plastic embellishment. In particular the images became increasingly rigid and did not portray the vitality of expression of the past.

A striking contrast of such decadence can be gleaned from the surviving sculptures from Verinag. For instance, the Vishnu Chaturmurti from here does not possess the same muscular attraction, clear-cut chiselling and elaborate decoration or the look of dignified composure, peace and compassion as is illustrated in such sculptures from Avantipura. The Verinag image is thickly legged, stiff and of husky form. The noticeable feature is that the *dhoti* worn by the god is shorter on the one leg than on the other.

Apart from laying out the new foundations of religious edifices by the king, his ministers and family members, steps were taken for the restoration of the ruined ones. In addition to three temples of his father, he completed the construction of Sullairhara started by his uncle Ucchala in honour of his sister Sulla. The king's relatives and family members made a special drive in building or in restoration of the ruined Buddhist shrines. This had a lasting effect even after his death. One such instance as recorded by Kalhana himself is that of a Buddhist shrine which was burnt in the troubled times in the beginning of Jayasimha's reign.[137] Its restoration during his own time is corroborated by an inscriptional evidence. The location of the site is reported to be at Arigom which is the old Hadigrama of Kalhana—a village of Nagam in Badgam district. The place was of considerable historical importance. It is the place where Gopaditya is said to have established an *agrahara*.[138] The inscription, which was found on one of the sides of the stone, covered a space of 17.5″ × 3″ and the characters were in Sharada script. The language is Sanskrit. It informs us that a certain Ramadeva built a brick shrine to house an image of Avalokiteshvara instead of a wooden shrine which had formerly been constructed by a *vaidya* (physician) Ulhana and which according to Kalhana's own version was burnt down during the reign of king Simha identified with Jayasimha. Vaidya Ulhana is Kalhana's Ulhana, son of Sahadeva and a supporter of Sujji who actually burnt Hadigrama.[139] The inscription also mentions that the wooden shrine built by him was in the vicinity of Gangeshvara (modern Ganeshvara). Ganeshvara must be the corruption of the Gangeshvara of the inscription which must have been the name of Shiva temple. Numerous images, pedestals, carved stones and bricks lie scattered even now and further probing in and around the area would yield substantial results. The date of the inscription is interpreted as Sunday the 16th November 1197 after more than four decades of king Jayasimha's death. But [140] for the history and architecture of Kashmir, the inscription is of immense value. Firstly, it shows that wood and bricks were freely used in the 12th century and secondly that

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Buddhism carried on its faith even at the end of the century, more so under the vacillating patronage of the rulers. Thirdly, it provides an adequate support that there existed religious toleration in the valley despite heavy odds. Avalokiteshvara—the most compassionate Bodhisattva was worshipped along with that of lord Shiva who too on occasions is merciful and grants boons to devotees. The existence of the two temples, one of Avalokiteshvara and the other of Gangeshvara (Shiva) as proved by inscriptional record is, therefore, of great historical significance.[141] In the same context, about 2 years back, a stone inscription in Sharada script was located by Mr. Akhtar Mohi-ud-din, a scholar of repute, just near his residence at Lalbazar, Srinagar. The date recorded on it corresponds to mid-12th century (King Jayasimha's reign). It further records that a *Kamala* Vihara was built by Udaya Shri. All this confirms the writing of Kalhana that many Buddhist and Hindu sanctuaries were built up during the reign of Jayasimha when he was himself an eyewitness to such operations. Kalhana could record the events of the king only upto his twenty-second year of his reign corresponding to 1149-50. His chronicle, therefore, remained incomplete because of his death. The king himself lived up to 1154-55 and the records are known from the chronicle composed by Kalhana's successor—Jonaraja.[142]

Jonaraja was a contemporary of Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413) and as such his narration of events comparatively received lesser treatment of the happenings that have occurred more than two centuries before him. Still it gives a deep insight into the historical development which accounts for the disintegration of Hindu rule, establishment of Muslim rule, spread of Islam, Hindu-Muslim relations and lastly Zain-ul-Abidin's (1421-72) policy of religious tolerance covering a period of over three hundred years.

During the remaining years of king Jayasimha, the first event referred to is the arrival of Malla (Mallachandra), a scion of Susharma—the ruler of Trigarta. The territory of Trigarta is the region watered by three rivers, the Ravi, the Bias and the Satluj. Its capital was at Jalandhara and fort at Kot Kangra. It is identical with the modern hill district of Kangra situated between the mountains of Chamba and the upper course of Bias. Along with the territory of Lohara, Jalandhara (the present town and district of Jalandhar in the Punjab) was held by Lalitaditya's feudatories.[143]

Jayasimha also undertook successful expedition against Turuskhas. They were in all probability the Ghazanavites who were marching towards the outskirts of the valley after they were facing reverses at the rising Ghuries.[144]

Jayasimha's successor to the throne of Kashmir after his death in 1155 was his son Paramanuka identical with Parmandi of Kalhana[145] or Paramandeva of Tapar inscriptions. His coins bear the legend Sri Parmadeva or Sri Paradeva.[146]

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Paramanuka was a weak king. During his reign the chieftains of hilly regions like Kishtwar, Rajouri and Tibet declared independence. His crafty officials—Prayaga and Janaka filled his treasury through unfair means. With no other achievements, to his credit, the king died in the month of September 1164 and was succeeded by his son Vantideva who ruled for seven years from 1164-71. He died without leaving behind any successor to the throne of Kashmir and in this way the second Lohara dynasty came to an end.

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7

History and Archaeology

Later Hindu Period (1171-1339 A.D)

The Hindu kingdom and its political system had already fallen from its ancient ideal and its vigour because of mutual jealousies and dissensions. The incompetence of the rulers who followed the kings of second Lohara dynasty further weakened the political structure which began to disintegrate and finally broke up. The central authority was seldom followed outside the capital.

The first king who followed Vantideva was Vuppadeva (1171-81). What relation he had with the former king is not known. He was a king of childish nature. He had a feeling that pebbles if nourished on milk would turn into boulders. After his death, his brother Jassaka occupied the throne.

Jassaka (1181-99) was no better than his brother. The Lavanyas—one of the tribes of Damaras had supported him in getting the crown and they took undue advantage of this and of the weakness of the king with the result that they practically managed the affairs of the state themselves and the king was a mere puppet in their hands. The people were hurt at the affairs of the state. Two Brahman brothers Bhima and Ksuksa assumed great powers and had an urge to capture the throne but refrained from such a step for fear of Damaras. After ruling over the valley for over eighteen years, Jassaka breathed his last and was succeeded by his son Jagadeva.[1]

Jagadeva (1199-1213) was a capable and enlightened ruler. He introduced reformative steps which were not liked by the Kayastha officials who with the active support of the powerful Damaras were successful in driving the king out of the state, shortly after he regained the throne with the help of his faithful minister Gunakara-rahula. In a much distracted age, the corrupt political system always remained unpredictable. Bloody feuds sparked by personal rivalries and lust for power predominated. The lord of the gate, Padma imprisoned him and murdered him in captivity.

Shocked by the death of his father, Rajadeva (1213-36) had left for Kishtwar but the enemies of Padma brought him back. His presence at the capital gave rise to

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a civil war which ended in favour of Rajadeva because of the death of his rival—Padma. The assembly of Brahmans appointed Rajadeva as the king. The king made the Damaras to work as labourers in the fields who rose against him and threatened his royal authority. One of the rebels, Baladhyachandra—the lord of Lohara even occupied half of the capital. The king failed to suppress his activities and in disgust breathed his last in 1236 leaving the throne to his son Samgramadeva.

Samgramadeva (1236-52) was a powerful king but his plans to crush the troublesome Damaras failed because of the treachery of his own brother, Surya. When the king came to know about the evil intentions of his brother, Surya fled from Srinagar and with the support of Damaras he raised a rebellion which at home front was assisted by the sons and the relatives of one Brahman named Kalhana (antecedents not known). Despite the attempts made by the king to crush the rebellion, he failed and had to take refuge in Rajouri. In his absence, the people were put to much trouble by Damaras. At Rajouri, he could consolidate his force and was successful in defeating his enemies and once again regained his throne. He hesitated to kill the sons of Kalhana who were Brahmans but in turn they killed him in 1252.

Ramadeva on assuming the powers of the king after the death of his father, arrested and then executed the murderers of his father. He was gifted with a keen sense of adaptability. He took effective measures in governing the country. He restored peace at home which is indicated by his pious acts. His queen Samudra built a *matha* at Somyar in Srinagar and the king himself repaired the Vishnu temple of Utpalasvamin[2] built by Utpala, maternal uncle of king Cippata-Jayapida in the early part of the 9th century.[3] Utpalapura has been identified with the ruined structure at Kakapora[4]—an important station of the river side on Srinagar-Shopian road. The identification falls in line with the excavations at the ancient site of village Kakapora. Just on the side of river Jhelum and about half a kilometre inside the present road on the left, structural remains of a temple were exposed which repeat the characteristics of the group of temples belonging to pre-Lohara dynasties. The small central shrine raised on a high plinth in the middle of the courtyard is enclosed by an enclosure which was earlier presumed to be the base of the colonnaded peristyle, but later on it turned to be unornamental and without any cells. Besides, a few copper coins of no great antiquity, a small but extremely fine statuette of Lakshmi-Narayana have been discovered during the course of trial excavation.[5] The presence of Vishnu image with his consort is an exception to the Vaikuntha form commonly found in the temples of the previous periods. However, the phases of original construction and the restoration of the shrine can only be ascertained by further probing at the site which would also determine the date of this sculpture. The king had no issue and adopted a Brahman boy as his son who

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succeeded him after his death in 1273.[6]

Lakshmandeva, the adopted son of the late king obtained the crown. He was a highly learned man but lacked courage and vigour. He even as a king did not give up Brahmanical way of life. His queen Ahala also built a *matha* named after her as Ahalamatha (present day locality of Ahlamar) situated on the right bank of river Jhelum between the present Badshah bridge and the second bridge and above the ancient site of Samudramatha (marked by the present Somyar Ghat) built by Samudra, the queen of Ramadeva.[7] The peaceful atmosphere of the land was disturbed by the sudden invasion of Kajjala who must have been a Mongol. The royal authority of the king was confined to the valley of Liddar. The king, it is claimed, died in a campaign against Kajjala[8] but Jonaraja mentioned that he ruled the land for thirteen years, three months and twelve days till the year 1286.[9]

Simhadeva declared himself the king in his hide out in Liddar (ancient Liddari). This was the pargana of Dachunpor and Khovurpor drained by river Liddar.[10] Some unauthenticated references claim that he was the son of the former king Lakshmanadeva himself.[11] Even though Kajjala was driven out of the land, domestic troubles remained unabated till his rival claimant for the throne, Samgramachandra, the lord of Lohara died. With the restoration of peace at home, he erected a number of religious foundations. He was a scholar and sang devotional verses in praise of god Shiva but at the same time led a licentious life, which ultimately took his life in 1301.

After the death of Simhadeva, his brother Suhadeva (1301-20) ascended the throne. Because of his valour, he could extend the limits of his empire beyond the territory of Rajouri but at the same time he lacked diplomacy and was munificent in trusting outsiders who came to him on one pretext or the other. Among those were hired soldiers, refugees and travellers who were provided with the means of subsistence. Their entry in the valley hastened the fall of the Hindu rule in the valley. First came Shahmir in 1313 who was a mercenary soldier of a Khasa tribe. The king took him into the service and in the beginning he extended his full support to him in extending his authority over the entire valley. The land was once again plunged into darkness by the foreign invasion led by Dulaca,[12] or Zulchu[13] or Zulqadar Khan.[14] He was the army commander of the king of Kandahar.[15] His rustic and bloody way of dealings made others to believe that he was the descendant of Chengiz Khan and came to Kashmir in 1320 with a force of 70,000 cavalry and wrought havoc in the valley.[16] However, he entered Kashmir through an easy pass of Zoji-La which was followed by Rinchana also and after about two centuries, by Mughal representative Mirza Haidar Dughlat.[17] While the king himself obliged Duluca by offering a huge sum of money collected by levying taxes on the people, the king's prime minister and a close relative Ramachandra employed Rinchana

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who settled in Gagangir (ancient Gaganagiri) above Kangan in Lar pargana. This hilly tract of the right side of river Sindh was an important watch station and has played an important role in connection with the invasions which were made through the Zoji-La pass.[18]

Both Duluca and Rinchana committed atrocities upon the people, the former in the valley proper and the later in the mountains. Even after money offered to Duluca by the king, the former engaged himself in murder, plunder and other horrible crimes. A large number of able-bodied Brahmans were taken as slaves but were perished in a snow storm along with Duluca's own men. He feared the advancing cold and wanted to leave before the advent of winter. The country was depopulated, and ruined beyond imagination. Nobody came to till the land and the valley was without grass or grain. The king in utter confusion fled to Kishtwar. The departure of Duluca and the king coupled with the chaotic conditions, induced Rinchana to swoop down from the mountains and gather what was left after Duluca's invasion. Ramachandra in absence of the king offered him a firm resistance but was treacherously killed by Rinchana and Shahmir while he was asleep.[19] Rinchana then in the year 1320 proclaimed himself as the king of Kashmir and married the daughter of Ramachandra. He thus rose to be the king of Kashmir from the position of a refugee.

Rinchana (1320-23) retained Shahmir in his service. He could establish his authority over the land with the support and active co-operation of Shahmir. He was wise and far-sighted. Being a stranger to Kashmir, he wanted to have a strong government and curb the activities of the people who were bent upon creating troubles. The sufferings of the people were checked by appointing Shahmir as the head of the government. The Lavanyas, the main trouble shooters, were won over by creating a division among themselves. At the same time he showed justice to all irrespective of status or caste. The people once again heaved a sigh of relief and satisfied themselves with the spiritual and intellectual pursuits which were altogether halted by the anarchy to which they were subjected to during the reign of Suhadeva. In order to mingle with the people and earn more popularity, he wanted to accept the religion of the masses. Majority of the Kashmiris at that time were devoted to Shaivism and he himself was a Buddhist. The change of religion would have proved blessing in disguise for the people and for the establishment of a strong and broad-based tradition of Shaivism. It was the sad irony of fate that Kashmiri Brahmans rejected the offer. He was also rejected by the known Shaiva teacher—Devasvami who did not initiate him into his faith because he was an outcaste Bhautta (Kashmiri word derived from Buddha. Ladakhi Buddhists are still called by this name). The discourtesy thus shown to him by short-sighted Brahmans forced him to embrace Islam and this event changed the chapter of Kashmir's

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history which never turned back. In the new religion, of course new to Kashmir, he was initiated by a Muslim saint Baba Bulbul Qalandar who had entered Kashmir as a traveller.[20] The original name of the saint was Abdul Rahman though some say it to be Sayyid Sharaf-ud-Din. He had widely travelled and after a long stay at Baghdad he came to Kashmir during the reign of Suhadeva.[21] It is, however, also believed that he embraced Islam owing to his intimacy with Shahmir.[22] He bore the name of Sadr-ud-din after conversion.

The short reign of three years was not free from troubles for Rinchana. In the first instance Suhadeva returned to the valley from Kishtwar to lay down his claim once again on the throne. The people did not welcome him since they were unhappy over his action in taxing them and then cowardly leaving them in the hands of Duluca, only to be plundred and killed. With no support from the masses, his plans got thwarted. In the year 1323, some conspirators attacked him and in the encounter he received a severe blow on his head which proved fatal. At the time of his death, he left his son and queen to the care of Shahmir. Shahmir who had an eye on the throne of Kashmir right from his entry in the valley as a homeless wanderer avoided Rinchana's son to succeed his father because he was a minor. Instead, he showed his magnanimity in inviting Udyanadeva—the brother of the former king Suhadeva who was living as a refugee in Ghandhara, to occupy the throne. Obviously, he remained obliged to Shahmir. Still he could have asserted his position but he was weak and lazy. He spent most of the time in the performance of religious duties. The affairs of the government were looked after by his queen—Kota Devi, the widow of Rinchana whom he had married after he sat on the throne of Kashmir.

The land came under an attack from Achala, a powerful Damara. The king like his brother fled to Tibet but his queen gave a strong fight to the invader and in this fight, Shahmir whole heartedly supported her. The invader was beaten back but in the process, Shahmir received the admiration of the people who took him as the real ruler of the whole country. The witty Shahmir gained the confidence of the officers, powerful nobles and Brahman chiefs by entering into matrimonial alliances with them. On the other hand, Udyanadeva returned from his hide-out and re-occupied the throne. The people had lost the confidence the ruler because of his cowardly action in fleeing the country at the time of Achala's invasion. Whenever he or his queen would try to be harsh towards Shahmir, he would threaten them by raising Haidar, Rinchana's son, to the throne. The king died in 1338.

Shahmir had now become a formidable force and could have easily seized the power. But Kota Devi knowing his power and prestige kept the death of her husband a secret till she got the time to overhaul the administration. She had two sons, Haidar by Rinchana and Jatta by Udyanadeva. She discarded both of them and ascended the throne herself. She shifted the seat of government from Srinagar

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to the strong fort of Anderkot (ancient Jayapidapura) and in order to curb the power of Shahmir, she appointed a junior but capable minister, Bhatta Bhikshana as her chief adviser. This infuriated Shahmir and he assassinated Bhatta Bhikshana. Kota Devi was at that time in a position to bring the murderer to book but her own counsellors who were already bribed by Shahmir dissuaded her from taking any drastic action. The golden opportunity was allowed to slip for which Kota Devi repented too much. Shahmir now came out openly against the royal authority and made himself the master of the capital. He then beseized the queen in the fort at Anderkot and she ultimately committed suicide. Thus the path for Shahmir was clear and he ascended the throne of Kashmir under the title of Sultan Shams-ud-din in 1339 without any opposition whatsoever. His accession marked not only the beginning of a new dynasty but also of the Muslim rule in Kashmir.

The historical data thus presented make it clear that the transfer of power in Kashmir from the Hindus to the Muslims was purely a domestic matter. Rinchana, who was the first non-Hindu to occupy the Kashmir throne, was a Tibetan, and became a Muslim by accident. Shahmir's usurption was a *coup d'etat* and not a conquest. He and his immediate successors depended upon the support of the indigenous nobles, who were mostly Hindus, for the stability of their rule. The ground for the change over was made smooth because of incompetence of the kings who occupied the throne after queen Didda's death. The royal throne from that time onwards had become the den of scoundrels, intriguers, conspirators, idiots and unscrupulous men. It was statesmanship and dynamism of queen Didda which saved the kingdom of Kashmir from the Mohammedan conquest that took over Punjab under Mohammad Ghaznavi and later on under Shahab-ud-din Mohammad Ghori the whole of northern India. She had no smooth sailing and had to face both internal and external dangers but still she maintained the unity and integrity of the country. On the other hand, her successors to the throne were so weak that they could not even resist the temptation of the claimants to the throne or foresee the approaching danger. Anybody with a little wit and vigour could usurp the throne. At the time of danger, the kings left the land like cowards and the people were subjected to untold sufferings at the hands of invaders. The harassment caused to the people by the kings themselves or their nobles is evident by the repeated fasts undertaken by the Brahmans. The Shaiva teachers laid emphasis on the spiritual and philosophical aspects of Shaivism and did not care about the moral degradation of the kings or the people at large. Dancing girls were attached to the sacred shrines and were taken as concubines into the harem. Depicting the picture of the society, it is recorded that such dancing girls were the custodians of the sacred shrines, the merchants who were actually interested in the collection of wealth by unfair means were pretending to be eager to listen to the sacred texts; the Brahmans of the

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Purohita corporations were experts in arranging solemn fasts; the Damaras were more like cultivators but were equipped with arms. All these members of the society were taking delight in the king's misfortune.[23] Such misdeeds of the rulers and the people quickened the process of change of the government.

The period covered by the rule of later Hindu kings experienced stormiest events in the valley which also brought about a speedy end to the building of religious structures. Wherever these were built, they, apart from being comparatively small, were so lifeless that by the advent of Muslim rule in the first quarter of 14th century, much of the fine spirit of stone architecture had lost its stately and dignified posture. These structures, however, left behind the glorious tradition which in the time to come stimulated the creation of the magnificent monuments of the Mohammedan period.

Along with Hinduism, Buddhist ideas and doctrines played a considerable part in every aspect of social life. Buddha had received prominence among the incarnations of Vishnu which is recorded in literary documents[24] and also is known by archaeological finds.[25]

No doubt on the architectural or sculptural front, it was a period of relative inactivity due to repeated foreign invasions and court dissensions which had almost catalyzed artistic technique. A peculiar mode of exposition of Buddhist school was pressed into service represented by symbols, figures and diagrams called *Mandalas* (mystical circles). The conception of *Mandalas* was related to the metaphysical structure of the world. It is created by illustrating celestial beings above and rows of mediating Buddhas below and the system is derived from the Indian Tantric Buddhism. In course of time, it gave rise to sexual symbolism and demon worship.[26] It is a complex form of Mahayana Buddhism known as Vajrayana or esoteric Buddhism. It was responsible for stirring a feeling of discontent among the common devotees who believed in the old established monastic order. As time passed on, it grew vigorously and gathered strength. It overshadowed the brilliant teachings of Buddhism and can rightly be said as the harbinger of misfortune for Buddhism not only in India but in the valley of Kashmir as well.

The worship of *Mandala* in the valley is known from the epigraphical evidence obtained from Vejibror (Bijibehara). The inscription is incised on the sides of a well polished stone square in shape and the writing in the middle is divided by a few figures which are mutilated beyond recognition. Though the date of inscription is not clear, the name of the king in whose reign it was put up is quite readable. It records that a magical circle of Lokeshvara—Bhattaraka was instituted by the teacher Kamalasriya in the reign of paramount sovereign, the illustrious Rajadeva.[27] Rajadeva was the son and successor of Jagadeva (1199-1213) who ruled Kashmir from 1213 to 1236. As in the case of Arigom (old Hadigrama) inscription, it is

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consecrated in honour of Lord Lokeshvara or Avalokiteshvara with the aim of obtaining religious merits by the Tantrik Buddhists.[28] The main focus of the adoration was the magical circle which is indicated by a raised circle on the top of the stone.[29]

Both on the architectural and literary sides, Shaivism continued to receive significant positon. Emphasis was laid on the erection of miniature shrines near the springs or lakes. Even the erection of mathas, often mentioned during the reign of Jayasimha or even after, could not exclusively be taken as Buddhist structures. These were famous as the seats of learning and drew students from outside to the valley for acquiring knowledge. They served as a temple, college and an almshouse.[30] This also must have been the case with viharas. Kalhana himself was a witness to the construction of a matha by Sumanas, younger brother of Rilhana—a very powerful and influential minister of king Jayasimha (1128-55) and mentions that this matha contained perfect Shivalingas.[31] Even the Shiva shrines built during the reign of later Hindu kings were inferior and lacked soaring grandeur of the preceding period. Still they are the standing examples of a long tradition of structural experience gained in the art of building the religious edifices.

The notable specimen of the decadent architecture can be gleaned from a small temple excavated in the middle of a rectangular water reservoir near Dak Bungalow at Patan. The architectural treatment of the temple or of its appurtenance does not warrant to associate it with the temple built by Ratnavardhana, the minister of king Shankaravarman (883-902).[32] It is hardly 3′ square externally and is built of three stone slabs only. The top crowning stone is not present but the structural evidence points out that the roof must have been pyramidal in shape rising in two tiers. However, the *Mandapa* type of its construction points to the survival of the tradition of building such temples as that of Pandrethan or Payar though it lacks their artistic perception or sculptural genius. Another example of the kind is a small shrine in simplified but in a complete form at a most attractive place of Manasbal lake (ancient Manasa-saras).[33] Its pyramidal roof of two tiers is divided by a prominent cornice and a horizontal band decorated with a series of dentils, metopes and a miniature figure of a Lakulisha. In a similar situation, on the western side of the Wular lake (ancient Mahapadmasaras) or the lake of Mahapadma, the tutelary Naga deity, a temple was erected with dressed stone blocks having an archaic look. The walls of the temple are of disproportionate size and strength indicative of an inexperienced workmanship. Still its erection at such an inaccessible place gives proof of the endurance on the part of robust and vigorous people engaged in the construction of such shrines. The erection of these shrines near the springs or the reverence shown to the springs like Rudrasandhya, Pawansandhya, Sapta-Rishi springs (seven springs close to one another), Wasuka Nag all falling in the vicinity of Verinag or other such famous springs in the valley is the result of outburst of the peoples' faith

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in the Naga cult which was a popular superstition and belief of the early man in the valley. Quite likely carved snake images were installed on these sites which have been mentioned to exist as late as 17th century.[34] The temple site at Wular lake was afterwards converted into an artificial island by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70).

By the beginning of 13th century, the art of dressing stones or building of even smaller shrines almost came to an end. The figurative representation remained confined to the carved out niches of the rocks. One such instance is noticed at the village of Nadihal situated to the west of Wular lake about 54 kms from Srinagar on Srinagar–Bandipora road. Here some isolated rocks are lying on the fringe of a plateau at a height of about 30′ from the link road. In one of the rock niches, square in size, each side measuring 3′ 4″ and with a inside depth of 2′, sculptural representations have been executed on three sides with an opening on the west. The composition of the deities carved in low relief contains three-headed Shiva, Ardhanarishvara form of Shiva with two attendants on either side, Vaikuntha form of Vishnu, Mahishasuramardhini besides a female deity with two devotees gazing towards her. Two mortice holes on the corners of the upper border of the opening suggest of elaborate arrangement for a wooden door. The presence of composite figures of these deities suggests a common place of worship for Vaishnavites, Shaivites and also for Shakti devotees. This, therefore, is an ample proof of departure from past practice in creating large buildings for different gods and thus indicates limited perceptions and capacities for such undertakings. This decadent stage was further replaced by carving out slight linga-shaped proturberances. One thousand such proturberances were arranged round the cylinder of linga in twenty rows of fifty each and the shrine was known as *Sahashramukha* Shivalinga located at a village Siligram situated 7 kms above Mattan on Anantnag-Pahalgam road.[35] Carving of thousand lingas on a rock has earlier been mentioned by Kalhana also but to carve them in one day is not practically possible and as such identification of present shrine with the *Sahastralingi* as mentioned in the chronicle does not appear plausible.[36] Besides, protuberation of lingas carved do not carry any noticeable similarity in linga reproductions of an early period and at the same time lack uniformity of space in relation to surrounding surfaces. This nature of work did not involve erection of columns, arches for adjustment of support to load or carry the weight. In short no structural workmanship was required in the process of carving out these lingas.

Another example of the same kind, though in a much restrained manner is found on a boulder in the forest limits at the back of village Mamal, Pahalgam. Further, the structural and sculptural productions were narrowed down on the scattered blocks of stones, of varying sizes, commonly known as 'Memorial stones'. There is a noticeable decline in the quality of the carving of the stone or the figural

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decorations. The aritsts tried to reproduce the old spirit but in spite of their best efforts, the art was drawing towards its end. The memorial stones were generally divided into two panels, the upper one held the image of Bhairava accompanied by a dog or some other deity with devotees, or a Shivalinga on a pedestal and a devotee offering water over it; the lower panel mainly represented a donor or the worshipper. As an exception to these, memorial stones excavated some time back from the fields of Loduv village were life size and carried striking decorative designs. One of the stones bore the rude figure of *Lakulisha* in the top panel which is the only survival of the attractive figurine representation found at the temples of Pandrethan and Payar.

Lakulisha was supposed to be the originator of the Pashupata sect[37] whose ascetics were the promulgators of Shivagama or Agamanta Shaivism.[38] It is apparent from this that the literary activities or the propagation of Shaiva faith were continued inspite of the decline of Brahmanical supremacy. Besides Jonaraja, who continued Kalhana's narration from 1149 to 1459, there were many intellectuals who composed their works during the last days of Hindu rule. Among them mention may be made of Jayadratha, composer of a poem in *kavya* style containing thirty-two cantos, some legends of which deal with Shiva, his incarnations and places of pilgrimages. Jayadratha wrote a commentary on *Tantraloka*, Bhatta Vamadeva wrote a work entitled *Janma-Marna Vichara*. Some of the poems were of devotional nature which among others included also *Vakroti-Panchashika* of Ratnakara, *Stotravali of Utpala* by Anandavardhana, *Shivamahimah* by Pushpadanta, *Stuti Kusmanjali* by Jagdhar Bhatta. Jonaraja refers to another poet Shaka who flourished in the court of Samgramadeva (1235-52) and composed a work in which he made the king as its hero.[39] Not much appears to have been written on Buddhist schools during this period. The art also ceased to be creative. This is evident from the simplicity of style of the *Awalien* (the first) mosque built by Rinchana after his conversion to Islam. It was of no particular artistic character. It was a simple prayer chamber with walls built of dislodged stones of a Hindu temple. Devoid of decorations it was absolutely kept calm and dark except two small niches on the walls inside the chamber for installation of earthen lamps. The superstructure was directly raised from the top of the standing walls which was of wood. The tradition of erecting this religious edifice, the first of its kind in the valley, nearer to the water was maintained. He built the mosque on the left bank of river Jhelum near the 5th bridge (Alikadal). Not far away from the mosque and in a similar situation, an ancient temple complex was converted into 'Free Kitchen' house—*Langarkhana* which later on came to be known as Bulbul Lankar after the name of the saint—Bulbul Shah. Such was the system initiated by the Muslims in Kashmir which in the long run elevated to great heights their architectural produc-

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tions following stability of their rule.

With the occupation of throne by the Muslims, Kashmir underwent a radical change. More and more migrants and adventurers came into the valley and a new social structure emerged in the midst of Hindus. There was architectural intrusion as well which affected the art of the valley also.

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8

History and Archaeology

Medieval and Sultanate Period (1339-1589 A.D.)

The extent of the deposit so far recognised in the last stage of the excavations at Semthan has not provided sufficient data indicative of any significant change in the cultural material. This evidence, however, coincides with the historical data that there has been no sudden outburst of change from the old order to the new. In the upper levels there is an intrusion of new pottery elements demarcated by rough and scarcely fine red ware of thick to medium fabric. It is devoid of glazed ware. The main shapes include knife-edged bowl, *handis*, flat plates, jars etc. The significant change is the presence of a rubble wall structure which authenticates the commencement of Muslim rule in the valley.[1] The roots of the Muslim rule were firmly planted by Shahmir who ascended on the throne of Kashmir under the title of Shamas-ud-din and laid the foundation of Sultanate dynasty which ruled the valley for about two and a half century.

Shamas-ud-din (1339-42 A.D.)

Since his entry into the valley in the year 1313, he was fully aware of the hardships faced by the people. Oppressive laws were done away with and extra taxes abolished. He subdued the turbulent Lavanyas (influential land owners and tribal headmen) and suppressed the insurrections led by Rajasthaniyas—high officials connected with the administration of justice.[2] On the other hand, he patronized Magres—an indigenous tribe and the Chaks who had come to Kashmir during the reign of Suhadeva (1301-20). Many officers in the army were from these two families and the chief commander was also selected from the Chak family. Even as a king, he treated his subjects without any discrimination. He even entered into matrimonial alliances with the Hindus. His death in the year 1342 was mourned both by Hindus and Muslims. He was succeeded by his eldest son Jamshid.

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Jamshid (1342-44 A.D.)

His rule of one year and ten months passed in fighting against his own younger brother Ali Sher who openly revolted against the king despite the fact that the latter consulted him off and on in the matters of public welfare. Ali Sher then gave him a tough fight and dethroned him in the year 1344. Jamshid fled away and died in 1345. Ali Sher ascended the throne under the title of Ala-ud-din.

Ala-ud-din (1344-55 A.D.)

The Sultan became the king by sheer dint of his military power which again he utilised in suppressing the uprising of Lavanyas. He did a momentous and laudable work in lending relief to the people who were suffering due to famine which struck during the early part of his reign. He took keen interest in the works of public utility. A bridge was constructed over the river Jhelum at Sopore. A new town after his own name known as Ala-ud-din-pur was laid out which became his capital also. The area extends from Jama Masjid to Alikadal. For the convenience of travellers, an inn was built at the ancient Buddhist site of Budhgira (modern Budhgir) on the right bank of the river and near the fifth bridge—Ali Kadal. He ruled for 12 years, 8 months and 13 days and was succeeded by his own son Shihab-ud-din.

Shihab-ud-din (1355-73 A.D.)

Shihab-ud-din was a man of great strength. He tightened his grip on the home front by suppressing the rebellious chiefs and then by military campaigns against the neighbouring territories which included Gilgit, Dardistan, Baltistan, Ladakh, Kishtwar and Udbhandapura (Ohind) near Attock on the right bank of river Indus, the seat of Shahi kings.[3] The tribe of Singa (modern Chingus) on Jammu-Rajouri road was subdued. His conquest of Kabul, Herat, Badakshan and Kandhar has been exaggerated since these regions were under the Mongol overlords who would not have allowed him to cross Hindukush.[4] So also there is no proof that he entered into matrimonial alliance with Feroz Shah Tughlak of Delhi with whom he is said to have fought on the banks of river Satluj but without any victory on either sides.[5] There is absolutely no firm evidence that by undertaking such extensive campaigns, the area of his domain extended beyond the valley of Kashmir. He had only an insatiable thirst for military campaigns and his reported conquests were of the nature of military raids.[6] On the other hand, these campaigns involved huge expenditure and in order to fill up the empty treasury, his minister, Udayashri advised him to melt the metal images of Hindu and Buddhist gods and convert them into coins. The king rebuked him saying that by demolishing the images set up by past

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generations to obtain fame and earn merit would bring them discredit. This shows his tolerant policy towards the Hindus and despite the suggestion given to him by the high positioned member of that community, he was not led astray like his son Sikandar. Still the Persian chroniclers have attributed to him the demolition of idols,[7] which argument does not sound well in the light of the welfare measures undertaken by him for his subjects. He showed exemplary character in helping the people who had suffered as a result of the devastating flood in 1360. He laid out gardens besides a town named after his own name Shihab-ud-dinpur (modern Shadipur). He opened schools for the education of children. Not only this, he showed great respect to Hindu gods and shrines. This is evident from a 18 lined stone inscription in Sharada characters obtained from an ancient and sacred site, Kotheir (Kalhana's Kapteshvara or the holy place of Papasudan). Its first verse contains an invocation of Sultan to lord Heramba (Ganesha) who puts an end to all the obstacles. He then claims his lineage from Pandvas' house. It appears that he took pride in being a progeny of ancient lunar race of India. Besides, the construction of *dharmamatha* (religious hospice), it is also recorded that he repaired the ancient temples here.

The last years of the king were troublesome because of his own doings. He was bewitched with the beauty of his sister-in-law's daughter, Lassa whom her own queen had brought up. On her persuasion and instigation, he banished his queen with her two sons—Hassan Khan and Ali Khan. Before his death, he sent messages to his sons to return. Hassan Khan, though reluctantly, responded to his call but as luck would have it, he reached Srinagar after the death of the king. Having no rival to the throne, the king's brother Hindal Khan occupied it.

Shihab-ud-din's long reign of 19 years was the most glorious epoch in the history of the Muslim Sultanates of Kashmir. Encouraging reports on political and religious conditions in the valley during his reign, prompted the sufi saint Sayyid Ali Hamadani to visit Kashmir from his native place which had far reaching consequences.

Qutub-ud-din (1373-89 A.D.)

Shihab-ud-din's brother, in absence of the legitimate heir, ascended the throne under the title of Qutub-ud-din.

Qutub-ud-din was a man of culture and learning. He gave attention to the needs of the public. He laid out a town in his own name called Qutub-ud-dinpur—a place on the left bank of the river in between 4th and 5th bridges. He was also an impartial dispenser of justice and patronized scholars, writers and poets.

Early in his career, he suppressed a conspiracy hatched by his Prime Minister, a Hindu, to dethrone him. The aim was to enthrone his nephew, Hassan Khan who

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was the co-conspirator. Besides, his military campaign remained confined to subdue the Lohara chief which did not turn out to be a successful operation. He was a tolerant king. He did not alienate the Hindus who were still in majority. He, in order to avoid frequent floods, performed a Yagna (sacrifice)[8] in which he distributed liberal gifts among the Brahmans. Despite pressures from sufi saints, he continued to follow Hindu rites and customs.

A galaxy of sufis were coming into valley even after Bulbul Shah. These included Sayyid Jalal-ud-din, Sayyid Taj-ud-din, Sayyid Bilal Shah and others who from time to time preached the tenets of Islam to the people but the practical and real work for establishment of Islamic faith goes to the credit of Sayyid Ali Hamadani. His arrival and stay in the valley hastened the spread of Islamic thought and expression among the masses. The amicable relations that existed till then between Hindus and Muslims began to dwindle. Through his preaching in well attended congregations of religious and sacred learning, the Brahmans of the valley lost much of their forces and Islam became an integral part of Kashmiri culture. In his visit to different parts of the valley in the company of some eminent Irani sufis, *Khanqahs* and *Langars* were established. He took his place permanently at Kali Mandir near 4th bridge (Zaina Kadal) in Srinagar which was converted into a *Khanqah*. It is still known as Khanqah Maulla Mosque or the Shah-i-Hamdan Mosque.

Qutub-ud-din and his predecessors did not openly patronized the propagation of Islam which was carried on till his times on peaceful lines. It, however, took a violent turn in the hands of the immediate successors of the Sultan and the Sayyid. The king died in the year 1389 after a reign of 16 years and was succeeded by his minor son Sikandar.

Sikandar (1389-1413 A.D.)

Sikandar was a minor when he ascended the throne of Kashmir. His young mother acted as a Regent and thus revived the old tradition of Hindu queens who often became Regents in similar circumstances. The queen mother, Subhatta, took full powers of the State's administration into her hand. Like Queen Didda, she was a courageous lady. She even sacrificed her daughter and son-in-law who had conspired against Sikandar. The king's younger brother Haibat, was put to death by his powerful minister, Rai Magrey. When he came of age, he took the reigns of the government into his own hands.

In the early years of his reign, Sultan remained preoccupied in suppressing the internal revolts, putting an end to the most powerful man in his court—Rai Magrey and in conquering Jammu, Ladakh, Rajouri, Poonch and even Ohind (Udbhandapura), Gandhara valley.

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Due to Sultan's liberal policy towards his own religion coupled with the persecution of Sayyids of Hamadan by Timur, a host of scholars and sufis came and preferred to stay in the valley. The influence of the earlier sufis was eclipsed by the arrival of Sayyid Muhammad Hamadani, son of Sayyid Ali Hamadani in 1393. The young king and the people received him with affection. He exercised complete mastery over the king and his courtiers. Among the latter was the king's Commander-in-Chief and the Prime Minister, Suhabhatta who became a convert under the name of Malik Saif-ud-din. Originally a Brahman of the land, he, after conversion, hated his former co-religionists in order to keep his position safe in the government. He, with the patronage of Sayyid Muhammad Hamadani and the Sultan, adopted heinous measures to embarrass the Hindus, to demolish their temples, to impose *Jazia* upon them and even forbade them to put *tilak* on their foreheads. During twelve years of stay of Sayyid Muhammad Hamadani and his followers in the valley, many more Muslim missionaries poured into valley whose tireless efforts brought about speedy development of Islam.[9] The unabated arrival of sufis from Iraq, Madina, Khurasan, Mawara-un-Nahr, Khwarazm, Balkh, Ghazni and other Muslim countries[10] made the Sultan fundamental in outlook. This led to iconoclastic activities which were executed on the persuasion of Saif-ud-din. Many famous temples in the valley were destroyed and the precious images broken or melted.[11] Almost all the Persian scholars have emphasised that Sikandar was a thorough iconoclast, the great 'Butshikast'[12]—a title he acquired because of religious persecution instigated by the influence of Timur and fanatic Muslims who had come to Srinagar.[13] Basically, his generosity prompted learned men to flock to his court.[14] Even if it is argued that Jonaraja made exaggerated account of Sikandar's deplorable action in destroying all the temples, the facts speak for themselves. Mirza Haider Dughlat records that he saw 150 idol temples, the beauty, size and style of which astonished him during the period he ruled the valley (1540-51).[15] So also in 1623 Emperor Jahangir also wrote that the lofty temples built before the advent of Islam were still in existence at the time of his visit.[16] Godfrey Thomas Vigne wrote as late as 1842 that he saw as many as 70 to 80 temples.[17] The existence of 100 or nearly 200 temples even if unhurt stands nowhere against the unlimited number of such shrines which might have run into thousands. Only about 300 years before, Kalhana himself referred that there was no space as large as *til* (sesame) without a temple.[18] This is evident from the scattered monumental ruins in close proximity to each other on the either bank of the river Jhelum alone even now. So there appears no exaggeration of destruction of temples by Jonaraja. He has rightly said, 'If the subordinates go amuck, the blame comes to the master.' The Sultan's contemporary historian, Jonaraja, clearly records that the king did not want to take such deplorable actions.[19]

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Another memorable event in the reign of Sikandar was his diplomatic relations with Amir Timur (Timur-i-lang). He was a Barlas Turk and his father was one of the earliest converts to Islam. In April 1398 he came to India and turned the city of Delhi into a place of bloodshed, ruin and destruction. There were immense spoils of rubies, diamonds, pearls, gold and silver ornaments and vessels, silk and brocades. There was general massacre of people including the children. Only the followers of Muslim religion escaped the wrath of Timur. With similar happenings going on in Kashmir, Amir Timur and Sikandar exchanged presents but the two never met each other.

Amir Timur died in 1405, i.e. eight years before the death of Sikandar. This must have brought about a marked change in the attitude of the Sultan. During this period the teaching of the local ascetics was also at its zenith. Their teaching helped in bringing about a halt to the mutual bickering among the Hindus and Muslims. Two names that come easily to the lips of the locals in the valley are of Lalleshwari, more popularly known by the homely name of Lal Ded (Mother Lal), and Sheikh Nur-ud-din better known as Nund Rishi. They were contemporaries. Lalleshwari is generally believed to have been born in 1355. She was upset by the rigid and outdated customs and traditions of Hindus and personally suffered in her house because of the Brahmanical hypocrisy and the then prevailing social conditions.[20] She preached in simple but proverbial language known as *Vakyas*.[21] No doubt she was a follower of Shaivism but she spoke against the Tantric method of religion and attacked idol worship, priesthood and aristocratic way of life.[22] She had reached the highest stage of absorption in God.[23] Her younger contemporary, Sheikh Nur-ud-din *alias* Nund Rishi also spoke in the same terms. Among the *sufi* saints, he is much revered.[24] During his life time, he founded an order of rishis which exercised tremendous influence on both the communities. Like Laleshwari, he also preached against the snares of false preachers. So in the last leg of Sultan's reign, there was a spiritual movement carried on by the mystics, rishis and sufis in Kashmir.[25] The source of their enlightenment came from Shaivites. In fact Sufis or Shaivites are two aspects of the same reality.[26]

The sayings of these saints had a wide appeal and the king was told that the destruction of the temples and the idols was not sanctioned by Islam and its propagation could be achieved by love and not by violence. This carried weight with the king who on his own persisted in his endeavours to keep his hands clean of religious persecution. Accordingly, the Sultan at once put an end to such activities which were carried out by recent converts or officials to tarnish his image.[27] This is also confirmed now by an archaeological find, the only one of its kind so far come across in the valley. It is a small sculptural slab located in the temple of Lord Ganesha at Ganpatyar, Srinagar. The image is identified as that of Brahma with per-

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sonified figures of four '*Vedas*'. An inscription below reads that the image has been consecrated in the reign of Sikandar.

The dedicatory inscription in Sharada script in two lines at the base of Brahma sculpture (Ganesh Mandir, Srinagar) has been presented as '(Sam) . . . . (85 (?) Sri Sikandara Saha Reoye Sangapati Rahulya Kastvehkena Tatha . . . .' In explaining the meaning of the inscription, it has been said that Sikandara Saha is the Sultan Sikandar and the year 85 refers to the Laukika era commonly in use in Kashmir and corresponds to 1409, which falls well within the reign of Sri (illustrious) Sultan Sikandar. The word *Sangapati* is said to denote a person who led a group of pilgrims to some sacred shrine. The image, it is further explained, was consecrated by Kastvakena son of Rahul, a Buddhist. Accordingly, the Sultan has been introduced as a liberal king who gave religious freedom to non-Muslims.[28] Could it be so that he changed his attitude in old age—an age of repentance. This again had raised controversial arguments. Both the Shaivites and the Vaishnavites who dominated the religious activities in the State have shown little regard to Brahma. In India also after the coming of Islam, the God had lost importance. Many stories were circulated against his personal character which it is understood, are responsible for the loss of faith in him.[29] In Kashmir, the worship of Brahma, though on a limited scale, was prevalent as late as 16th century when there were three shrines dedicated to Brahma as against forty-five places of Shiva, sixty-four places of Vishnu and twenty-two of Durga besides others.[30]

This solitary find provides a curious and wholly inadequate matrix for interpreting phantasmagoric spectacle of Sultan's life at that moment. The historical records from contemporary and later independent writers both in Sanskrit and Persian languages cannot be dismissed so easily. However, with the further probe if and when taken up, the realities could be properly assessed.

He adorned his town, named after him, as Sikandarpur now the present Nawahatta with elegant buildings, magnificent mosques and stately memorials. He was the founder of wooden architecture in the valley. Among his monumental buildings are Jama Masjid and the mosque at the Khanqah of Sayyid Ali Hamadani commonly known as Khanqah Maulla[31] or Shah Hamadan—the ancient shrine of Kali.[32] He laid the foundation stone of Idgah which was completed by his son who succeeded him after his death in 1413.

Sultan Ali Shah (1413-20 A.D.)

The eldest son of Sultan Sikandar, Mir Khan, succeeded his father's dominion under the name of Ali Shah. He was a minor and unaware of the technicalities of running the government. He, therefore, carried on with Suhabhatta, as his Prime Minister. In the first instance, he calmed down some of his rivals in the court and

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then repelled the attack of Feroz—the exiled son of Sultan Sikandar through his Hindu wife Shoba Devi. Suhabhatta *alias* Saif-ud-din now without any fear from the new Sultan persecuted the Hindus more vigorously which he could not do freely in the reign of Sultan Sikandar.[33] Even the influential and liberal saint Sheikh Nur-ud-din *alias* Nund Rishi was not spared. He was imprisoned for his intervention on behalf of the Brahmans.[34] They were forbidden to celebrate their rituals and ceremonies. Conversion to Islam was forced under pressure of heavy taxation and fines. Most of the Brahmans committed suicide. Some of them took poison, some killed themselves by hanging, others by drowning themselves into the water, yet others by falling from a precipice while others burnt themselves. The rest fled the country but got killed when their roads were blocked by sealing of the passes. In such anarchic and oppressive times, father never knew about his son nor the son about his father. The reign of terror came to an end only with the death of this ruthless convert in the year 1417. After the death of Saif-ud-din, there remained one contender for the post, who was his brother and had embraced Islam. He intended to follow the foot prints of his brother and thus maintain his supreme post. The younger brother of the king who was already popular among the masses defeated him in a battle and thus dashed his hopes to the ground. The joy of the people especially of the Hindus knew no bounds. The Sultan had no choice left but to appoint his younger brother, Shahi Khan as his Prime Minister. The king on seeing the popularity of the subjects towards his Prime Minister feared his deposition at his hands and abdicated the throne in favour of Shahi Khan in 1419. Before his departure for a pilgrimage to Mecca,[35] the Sultan conferred on him the title of Zain-ul-Abidin.

The arrangement had not to last long. On reaching Jammu, his father-in-law, Raja Bhilla Deva or Bhimadeva of Jammu persuaded him to change his decision and assisted by his troops he returned to the valley and Zain-ul-Abidin being aware of his weak position vacated the throne and thus Ali Shah again recovered his throne in the same year without any resistance.

The old ally of Zain-ul-Abidin when he was only a prince, Jasratha of Khuhkhura tribe of western Punjab invited him to his country in the winter of 1419 in order to finalise the plan for the overthrow of Sultan Ali Shah. Accordingly both of them along with the forces of Jasratha gave Ali Shah a befitting defeat at Thana—a village situated at a distance of 23 kms from Rajouri. The defeated Sultan was made a prisoner and killed afterwards by Jasratha's men. One historian has claimed that Jasratha wanted to claim the throne for himself,[36] but his view is not substantiated from other sources. Anyway, Prince Shahi Khan ascended the throne in the summer of 1420 after his triumphant entry into the valley.

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Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70 A.D.)

After a long period of unsettlement and internal troubles, the valley witnessed a truly revolutionary change in the religious, social and political scene immediately after the Sultan assumed powers of the State.

The king was aware of the atrocities committed on the Hindus as a result of which their population was reduced to only eleven families.[37] With Zain-ul-Abidin ascending the throne, confidence returned to them. Messengers were sent to those Hindus who had left the valley with the invitation to return to their homeland. They accepted the offer with pleasure.[38] Their religion had once again spontaneous growth. They were free to celebrate their festivals and in some of the known ones like the 'advent of spring' in the month of March-April commonly called '*Chaitra* festival', (Kashmiri Sounth) *Durga Puja* or the '*Vitasta* festival' (*Vyath Truvah*) falling on the 13th bright moon in the month of September in which the Sultan himself participated.[39] Many temples were repaired and idols were set up in villages.[40] Both Brahman and Muslim divines were equally patronized. A separate *langar* (charity house) was set up for the Yogis (recluse) and this place is still called as 'Jogilankar' in Rainawari.[41] *Havans* were performed by him and he studied Hindu Sastras some of which like *Mahabharata*, *Dasavtar* etc were translated into Persian. During the reign of his predecessors *Jazya* was levied on Brahmans who did not embrace Islam. This tax along with cremation tax was abolished and even cow-slaughter was banned. For this he was nicknamed as 'infidel'[42] but the Hindus called him with the appellation of Vishnu's incarnation—*Narayanavatar*. He ushered in an era of national glory power, prestige, prosperity and integration in the true sense of the word.

Being the saviour of Hindus, he was also criticised for encouraging conversion by raising the social status of the converts. The only difference being that his method of conversion was persuasion and not coersion. It was also argued that he paid no attention to infidelity or to Islam.[43] The fact remains that being an ardent follower of his own religion, he was equally loved by his Hindu subjects. He gave a place of pride to Hindus in his court, whether he was the physician Shri (Shriya) Bhatta, or Karpurabhatta, historians Jonaraja, Srivara, scholars and writers like Soma Pandit and Bhodhi Bhatta, the astronomer Rupabhatta, the commentator Ramananda or the vedantist Yudhabhatta. On the whole, the social status of the oppressed community, i.e. Hindus increased by regaining the freedom of worship, patronage of Sanskrit literature and distinction bestowed on men of letters, or those who were well versed in administrative or other skills. *Bhattas* meant such of the Brahmans who acquired mastery over Sanskrit or Persian language. With the domination of Muslims, and introduction of Persian language, these were divided into

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two groups. The first group was called *Bhasha Battas* who had mastery over Sanskrit Bhasha (language) and applied themselves to keeping alive the religious traditions of the Hindus. The other group was of *Karkuns* who devoted themselves to the learning of Persian and took up government jobs. In the same spirit he patronized local and foreign Muslim scholars, writers and historians like Maulana Kabir, Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri the court poet and the translator of *Mahabharata*, *Dasavtara* and Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* into Persian,[44] Mulla Jami and Mulla Udi the musicians, Qummi Razvi the theologian, Mulla Qazi Jamal-ud-din, the talented poet and others. By patronizing Sanskrit and Persian scholars, he maintained a close harmony and friendliness between the two communities. It is because of his broader outlook and tolerant nature, that he was popularly called as *Badshah*—the great king which he really deserved. The benevolent measures of the Sultan were not liked by Sayyids who had earlier migrated from Persia and other regions of Central Asia due to repression of Timur. They started destruction of sacred places and harassment to the people. The king with the support of his subjects and the influential and popular saints and savants like Sheikh Nur-ud-din Rishi, Sheikh Bha-ud-din Ganj Bakhsh and Sayyid Muhammad Madini weakened their authority and power. On the external front, he maintained good relations with Sultan Abu Said Mirza of Khurasan, the king of Egypt and the Sheriff of Mecca.[45] The inscription recorded on his coins gave him the title of *Naib-i-Amirul-Muminin* (the Deputy of the Commander of Faithful)[46] and thus he earned the reputation of a good Muslim from other Muslim countries. His political influence was acclaimed in the outer hilly tracts of Kashmir, Gandhara, Sindhu, Madra (Jammu), Rajouri, Guge (Tibet), Shel (near Leh) Malubha—the present town of Mulbe (near Kargil) on Kargil-Ladakh road and Udabhandapura (near Attock) in Gandhara. His suzerainty and paramountcy in such far flung regions coupled with peace and prosperity at home mark the king as the most remarkable personality in the history of Kashmir.

Zain-ul-Abidin was a man of versatile genius. He weeded out corruption from judiciary and public life. He did not forgive his kith and kin or his courtiers however influential they must have been. At the same time he avoided causeless imprisonment and harassment. Revenue system was reorganised. The land revenue was the chief source of income of the State. It was fixed at one-sixth and one-seventh of the produce of the land. The officials concerned in the collection of revenue were to be honest and kind towards peasants. The rate of land revenue was reduced and the agriculturists were given relief in cash and kind when the state suffered from the great havoc of famine because of untimely fall of snow.[47] In order to irrigate barren lands on the high plateaus, or make the marshes worth cultivation, he dug out series of canals.

The Sultan who had maintained good relations with the other countries espe-

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cially with the regions of Central Asia prompted artisans, craftsmen and other artists to come to Kashmir from there. They were provided with all the amenities. The old method of weaving was remodelled and significant progress was made in cutting and polishing of stones, glass blowing, wood carving, book binding, papier machie and paper making, lattice work etc. Silk and carpet weaving received a new boost. Arts and crafts attained an extraordinary high stage of achievement which was mainly due to Sultan's liberal and enlightened patronage. As a result of brisk trade with other countries, establishment of law and order and the absence of foreign invasion made the people of the valley economically prosperous and happy.

Zain-ul-Abidin's profundity of vision and power of productive imagination distinguish him as a great builder. His reign constituted a notable epoch in the field of architecture. He built palaces of fantastic proportions at his capital town of Zainanagar (present day Nowshera or Vicharnag) and at Zaina-dab or Razdan—the royal palace. Other towns and remains associated with his name are Zainagir (Sopore), Zainapur (Shopian), Zainakot (outskirt of Srinagar), attractive islands of Zaina lank in Wular lake, Sona lank and Rupa lank in Dal lake, Zainakadal—the bridge built over river Jhelum in Srinagar proper, mosques and mausoleums—the most prominent being the tomb of his own mother commonly known as Badshah monument, or that of Sultan's contemporary Muslim saint Pir Haji Muhammad Sahib or the mosque and tomb of Sayyid Muhammad Madani near Zadibal in Srinagar. The Jama Masjid—an outstanding testimony of pre-Mughal architecture in the valley, initially founded by Sultan Sikandar was completed by Zain-ul-Abidin himself. These outstanding examples are the brilliant phases of the building art which represent the mixed style of architecture from the other cultures.[48]

In the words of a historian, exceptional greatness finds a disgusting end.[49] In the case of this great monarch also, the later years of his rule were completely unhappy because of repeated misfortunes caused by the famine of 1460, followed by the floods of 1462, death of his faithful and confident ministers and companions, and of his queen Makhdumah Khatun in 1465 and finally the feelings of jealousy and enmity among his sons. The king was so sad and unhappy that he passed his last days in his palace listening to the philosophy written by sage Vashishta entitled *Mokshshopaya*—path of salvation and himself wrote his mournful account—*Shikayat*.[50] Before his death, he made his son Haji Khan his heir-apparent. He died in 1470 after a glorious reign of half a century.

The account of long and eventful reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin is based on the information provided by his contemporaries and historians. Jonaraja compiled his account upto 1459 (the year of his death) which was continued by his disciple Shrivara. The death of the Sultan was mourned by all as he was the greatest among the

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sovereigns. The subjects all over the country went without food on the day of his death and visited the place of burial with eyes full of tears and lamenting his departure to the heaven which according to them was also in a state of confusion and needed his presence for its consolidation as he had done in Kashmir.[51] His secular policy which generated a spirit of confidence among the terror-stricken Hindus is being cherished even today. Unfortunately it had no ennobling influence on succeeding Sultans.

The history of the later Sultans is demonstrated by the wars of successions, chaos and confusion. Their weak and shattering policy gave rise to new sects, free access to usurpers and influential nobles. The continued dynastic troubles and rivalry among the pretenders to the throne greatly undermined the Kashmir Sultanate. The three sons of the Sultan who survived out of his four sons remained always at daggers drawn even after the appointment of his second son Haji Khan as his successor.

Haji Khan ascended the throne under the name of Sultan Haidar Shah.

Sultan Haidar Shah (1470-72 A.D.)

Immediately after his accession to the throne, he shifted his capital from Nowshera to Sikandarpur—the modern locality of Nowhatta where he nominated his own son Hassan as his heir to the throne and appointed him as the Governor of Kamraj—the western division of the valley.[52] He also married him with the daughter of Sayyid Mirrak Hassan Baihaqi—a very influential leader of Sayyids who had by this time risen to a very powerful and commanding position. The Sultan made this matrimonial alliance only to strengthen his own and his family's position. He appointed his younger brother Bahram Khan as the Governor of Nagam—a known locality to the south of Srinagar on the road leading to the famous shrine of Char-i-Sharif—the resting place of saint Nur-ud-din Rishi. In the beginning he took strong measures to curb the activities of corrupt officials and restore a strong administration which had broken down due to lack of zeal on the part of the former Sultan during last days of his reign. But soon after he fell prey to luxurious way of life. He engrossed himself in excessive drinking, debauchery and licentiousness. No attention was paid to his duties as a king. Wicked officials ruled the land. The Hindus were persecuted afresh through one of the wicked officials Luli, who was a barber by profession. A noble state treasurer, Hassan Kuchay compromised with the Sultan's elder brother, Adam Khan to invade the valley and get the country rid of Luli's highhandedness. The plot leaked out which took the life of Hassan Kuchay and made Adam Khan to give up his plan of invading the country. He was killed while fighting against Mughals.[53] His body was however brought to Kashmir from

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Jammu and buried by the side of his father. His death gave more encouragement to Luli to harass the Hindus and demolish their sanctuaries. The resentment of the subjects prompted the only surviving son of the late Sultan, Behram Khan, the younger brother of the reigning Sultan to conspire against the government but his plans were not crowned with success. The king because of his failing health due to excessive drinking had a fall in his palace and died of the injuries in April 1472 after a rule of one year and ten months.

Haidar Shah was a man of letters, a musician and a poet. He is credited with the erection of a bridge over river Jhelum known as Nawa Kadal—the 6th bridge.

Sultan Haidar Shah was succeeded by his son Hassan Khan.

Hassan Shah (1472-84 A.D.)

Hassan Khan ascended the throne with the title of Sultan Hassan Shah. He appointed an influential noble Aswad Ahmad Yatu (entitled Malik)[54] as his Prime Minister, and with his support he revived the measures of his benevolent grandfather Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and in token of that retransferred his capital to Nowshera. His secular policy in the beginning of his reign is attested by an inscription in Sharada characters found at village Parepur—a hamlet to the east of Trigam (ancient Trigrami) in the valley of Lolab.[55] In the inscription king Hassan has been addressed as Maharaja—the great king and titled as *Paramabhattarka* (great among the wise) and *Devamathna* (godly).[56] Even though he was powerless and was completely dominated by his wife and the nobles, yet he devoted himself to the building of numerous buildings and edifices. He also rebuilt Jama Masjid and Shah-i-Hamadan Mosque (Khanqah-i-Maulla) which were burnt. His queen also built a mosque probably with a thousand doors. He was a musician par excellence and his contemporary historian, Shrivara was bestowed upon with lavish gifts as he was an accomplished musician court-poet, chronicler and was well versed in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic languages.

These liberal measures of the king and of his Prime Minister Malik Ahmad were opposed by other nobles who invited Behram Khan, the king's uncle to invade the land and secure the throne for himself. In the battle at Dulipora (modern village Doolipora) on the left bank of the Dangerwari stream on way to Sopore, Behram Khan was defeated, imprisoned, blinded and then died.

The peaceful reign was disturbed with the growing feud among the nobles of the king. His chief minister Malik Ahmad was very powerful and obtained further strength by arranging matrimonial alliances with the persons who commanded positions. He married his adopted son, Tazi Bhat, one of the trusted commanders of the Sultan with the daughter of the Commander-in-Chief, Jahangir Magre.

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Fath Khan, son of the Sultan's another uncle, late Adam Khan, was a strong claimant for the throne. He had taken refuge with Tatar Khan, uncle of Sultan Bahlol Lodi of Delhi (1451-1489). He at that time was the Governor of Punjab. In order to curb Tatar Khan's ambition to invade Jammu and then the valley with the aim of installing Fath Khan on the throne, Sultan's army was sent to Sialkot—the chief town of Tatar Khan. The commander, Tazi Bhat led the army from Kashmir and was joined by the Raja of Jammu. Both gave a tough fight to the forces of Tatar Khan. The Lodi Governor was defeated and the town of Sialkot was sacked. Tazi Bhat did not capture Fath Khan and thus allowed the forces of disruption to continue. The victory of Tazi Bhat raised his prestige both in the eyes of the king and the masses. He was appointed as the guardian of the eldest son of Sultan Muhammad Khan, and the other son of the Prime Minister, Nauroz was appointed as the guardian of his second son Hassan Khan.

In India, the Sayyids were annihilated as a result of revolts and plots hatched by the nobles against them. This resulted in laying out the foundation of Lodi dynasty in India of which Bahlol Lodi was the first independent ruler. Kashmir too was no exception. Here Sayyids had become a riotous group and were no more religious people. On the advice of Tazi Bhat, the king turned them out and consficated their property. The Sultan was convinced of the open revolt of the Sayyids and did not even mind the resentment of his father-in-law, Sayyid Mirak Hassan Baihaqi who was at that time their leader. It was during this time that the king, free from the external and internal troubles, paid attention towards the implementation of constructive schemes and erecting of secular and religious edifices.

The departure of Sayyids from the valley was not liked by Nauroz, the step brother of Tazi Bhat. His arguments poisoned the ears of his father, Malik Ahmed and he took away the guardianship of prince Muhammad from Tazi Bhat and transferred it to his son Nauroz. Tazi Bhat's success in some hazardous campaigns further increased the feud between him and Malik Ahmad. Ignoring the national interests Malik Ahmad prevailed upon the Sultan to recall Sayyids. The Sultan was further pressurised by his own queen Hayat Khatun to take this step. The king yielded. However, on their return, the Sayyids captured power and then did away with Tazi Bhat against the wishes of the majority of the people. They also afterwards put Malik Ahmad to death. In his absence, captivated by the wife as he was, the king appointed his father-in-law, Sayyid Mirak Hassan Baihaqi as his Prime Minister. Under his leadership the Sayyids turned bloody and unscrupulous tyrants. The people were reduced to a state of abject misery. The officers of the state considered accepting bribes as a virtue, to oppress the subjects as wisdom and addiction to women as happiness.[57]

The king died in 1484. Before his death, he had requested his father-in-law, the

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Prime Minister of the land to instal his uncle's son Fath Khan on the throne but the Sayyid did not act upon it. After the death of Hassan Shah, he placed his minor son Muhammad born from his own daughter, on the throne of Kashmir. The unilateral action on the part of the Sayyid sowed the seeds of disintegration, dynastic feuds, intrigues and anarchy which hastened the collapse of Kashmir Sultanate. The two rival princes changed the throne of Kashmir at frequent intervals. Muhammad was perhaps the only king in the history known to have lost the throne thrice but managed to regain it only with the support and favour of the nobles who at every stage used him as a pawn.

Muhammad Shah (1484-87 A.D.)—First Reign

The prince, Muhammad Khan was enthroned with the title of Muhammad Shah. He was a minor, hardly seven years of age. The king maker, his maternal grand-father, Sayyid Mirak Hassan Baihaqi, therefore, acted as his regent. He suppressed the subjects and his oppressive rule was openly challenged by the nobles and with the help of Raja Parsuram of Jammu who had taken shelter in the valley, they attacked the stronghold of Sayyids at Nowshera. Most of them were mercilessly murdered including Sayyid Mirak Hassan Baihaqi, his sons and other relatives. But no sooner than such a united action could bear fruit, the Sayyids were defended by Tatar Khan, the Lodi Governor of Punjab. The Kashmiris gave a tough fight to the combined forces of Sayyids and Tatar Khan and were defeated. The Sayyids had already killed Yusuf Khan, the son of Behram Khan, who was in prison. Thus a suitable replacement for the throne was prevented.

The defeat and finally the retreat of Sayyids brought to limelight leaders like Jahangir Magre, Saifdar, Idi Raina and Shams Chak. Out of the four, Jahangir Magre was successful in placing himself as the Prime Minister of the state. In fact two groups of nobles, Magres and Chaks, turned out to be more powerful and dominated the history of Kashmir till about 1561 when Chaks established themselves on the throne. The Magres were natives whereas the Chaks were foreigners from Dardistan and had entered in Kashmir as refugees in the beginning of fourteenth century.

Jahangir Magre who was exiled in the previous regime because of the tyranny of Sayyids, exterminated the remaining Sayyids also soon after capturing power. This gave offence to other three leaders who only for the lust of power again ignored the national interests. They invited Fath Khan and encouraged him to attack the valley. He made two unsuccessful attempts to capture the throne but Jahangir Magre was able to defeat him. On the home front Jahangir Magre took vengeance on the well-wishers of Fath Khan. Most of them were killed, some were thrown

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into prison and some fled the country. This gave a cause for the opponents of the Prime Minister to come together and this time under the leadership of Saif Dar. They compelled Fath Khan who after his defeat was staying in Rajouri, to make another attempt for the throne of Kashmir. This time in the year 1487, his forces with the active support of the locals defeated Jahangir Magre who left Kashmir and died in exile. Fath Khan ascended the throne and took care that the deposed Sultan is well looked after.

Fath Shah (1487-99 A.D.)—First Reign

Fath Khan, now Sultan Fath Shah appointed Saif Dar as his Prime Minister. Saif Dar was a very strong and efficient administrator. The people began to feel secure and were happy. But this was not to last long. Another powerful leader Shams Chak and other disgruntled nobles in a surprise attack killed Saif Dar in 1496. Shams Chak now became the Prime Minister. He was brave, robust and a man of great physical strength. Sayyid Muhammad Baihaqi who along with other followers had returned back and was awaiting for an opportunity to instal his sister's son Muhammad back on the throne. He took into confidence two important ministers of Shams Chak. These were Ibrahim Magre, son of Jahangir Magre and Musa Raina. All together they forced a war on Shams Chak in which they were triumphant. Both he and the Sultan fled for safety to Nowshera. Muhammad Shah was restored on the throne for the second time.

Muhammad Shah (1499-1505 A.D.)—Second Reign

The restoration of Muhammad Shah meant the restoration of power in the hands of Sayyids. The Kashmiris were fed up with their treatment and could not reconcile with the change in the administration. The two powerful ministers Musa Raina and Ibrahim Magre resigned from his ministry and joined the opposition under the leadership of Shams Chak—the ex-Prime Minister. They waged a war on the Sayyids in 1505 in which they were totally defeated. Sayyid Muhammad Baihaqi with his followers was killed. The Sultan escaped to Rajouri and the ground was clear for Fath Shah to lay claim on the throne.

Fath Shah (1505-16 A.D.)—Second Reign

Following the restoration of Fath Shah as the Sultan of Kashmir for the second term, Shams Chak returned as the Prime Minister. He took revengeful attitude against the sons of late Sayyid Muhammad Baihaqi, his followers and also those of Saif Dar. The people had to face endless miseries. These measures were taken by

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Shams Chak without consulting the Sultan and his colleagues Musa Raina and Ibrahim Magre. A plot was hatched against the Prime Minister and he was killed in 1505. The Sultan then appointed Musa Raina as his Prime Minister.

The ministry of Musa Raina coincided with the propagation of the Nurbakhshiya order by Mir Shamas-ud-din Iraqi. Mir Shamas-ud-din Iraqi born of a Sayyid family was a fanatic Muslim of the Shia sect. Nurbakhshiya order was at variance with the Islamic doctrines and was initially founded in Kain (Kohistan) by Sayyid Muhammad who was given the title of Nurbakhsh (giver of light) by his teacher Khawaja Ishaq—a disciple of Sayyid Ali Hamadani, the 'Shah-i-Hamadan' of Kashmir. Terrorised by the repercussions of Timurids, the followers of this sect had entered into the valley along with Sayyid Ali Hamadani. Mir Shamas-ud-din came to Kashmir first in the year 1484 during the reign of Sultan Hassan Shah (1472-84). At this time, he came on the advice of Sultan Husain Mirza Baiqara, Governor of Khurasan (1474-1506). Under great duress, he was able to propagate the doctrines of the new sect and created a host of followers before he left the valley after a stay of eight years.

Mir Shamus-ud-din next came in the year 1505 when Fath Shah was restored as Sultan for the second term. This time he proclaimed himself as the representative of the founder of Nurbakhshiya order and with the backing of the Prime Minister, Musa Raina, he inflicted untold miseries on Hindus. The conditions became so deplorable that the temples most of which were repaired during the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin, were destroyed along with the idols. The Hindus were persecuted and forcibly converted to Islam. The priests of the temples were arrested and their lands and belongings confiscated under the orders of the Prime Minister. The prominent leaders on the opposition side were Ibrahim Magre, Jahangir Padru, Osman Dar and Kachi Chak. All these nobles joined together and waged a war against Musa Raina, who was defeated and died from a horse fall in the year 1514. His death checked the activities of Mir Shamas-ud-din.

During this period of turmoil, the sincere action on the part of a Hindu leader, Pandit Kantha Bhat, to bring into Hindu fold all those converts who were forced to embrace Islam, proved counter-productive. The Hindus faced tremendous hardships more so when Kachi Chak became the Prime Minister after the Sultan surrendered before Muhammad Shah who was in exile. Muhammad Shah patronized by Kachi Chak and with the help obtained from Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) of Delhi invaded Kashmir and proclaimed himself as the Sultan of Kashmir for the third time.

Muhammad Shah (1516-26 A.D.)—Third Reign

On his restoration on the throne, he appointed Kachi Chak as his Prime Minister. Prior to him and towards the close of Fath Shah's second reign, Malik Osman

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Dar was the head of the administration. He had to face the combined opposition from Magres and Chaks led by Kachi Chak. The latter was successful in taking the reigns of the government in his hands. His behaviour with Hindus was in no way different from his predecessor Musa Raina. He, instigated by Mir Shamas-ud-din, extirpated Hindus who had come back to continue their religious activities, some openly and some secretly after their conversion to Islam. The result was that about 800 Hindu leaders were massacred and many more were forcibly converted to Islam in 1518.[58] In 1519, the main contender for the throne, Fath Shah died at Nowshera. His dead body was brought for burial to Sehyar near Nawakadal by his eldest son Sikandar Khan and his chief supporters who were disgruntled nobles opposing the authority of Kachi Chak. These included Abdul Magre, Lohar Magre, Idi Raina and Jahangir Padru.

Muhammad Shah, in fact, was the first ruler who raised a number of nobles of the Chak tribe to high offices. Among them was his Prime Minister, Kachi Chak with whose assistance he got the throne once again. On the other hand Magres resented the domination of Chaks. They, in order to restrain the powers of Kachi Chak who happened to be the father-in-law of the reigning Sultan, brought Fath Shah's sons, Sikandar Khan, Habib Khan and Nazuk Khan into their confidence. The eldest one among these, Sikandar Khan was proclaimed as Sultan in the occupied fort at Nagam—a village in the south about 18 kms from Srinagar in Badgam district. Kachi Chak challenged them and defeated them. They then again resisted the royal forces at Shadipur (Shahab-ud-dinpur)—a known locality on the confluence of the Jhelum and the Sindh rivers. There too the conspirators were defeated and prince Sikandar Khan was forced to leave the country.

Kachi Chak by this time had realised that the reasons behind the uprisings were the growing confrontation between him and his political rivals. He, therefore, discarded the path of confrontation and attempted to win them over by the settlement of matrimonial alliances between the members of the two communities—Chaks and Magres. This policy of politician-cum-statesman, Kachi Chak was not taken by the Sultan in good spirits. He forced him to leave the country. It was a blessing in disguise.

The exit of Kachi Chak resulted in the consolidation and then the domination by the Chak nobles. However, they were not destined to control the state for a long time. In 1525, Mughal forces came to the help of Sikandar Khan but were defeated by the Chaks who were traditionally strong and brave soldiers. Quite surprisingly, the exiled The former Prime Minister, Kachi Chak and his followers also joined with Chaks in the fight against Mughals. Sikandar Khan was imprisoned and afterwards blinded. Soon after he died.

The patriotic spirit shown by Kachi Chak in defeating the Mughals raised his

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prestige once more and he was restored to the highest post of Prime Minister. But before long, differences between him and the Sultan surfaced. The Sultan was dethroned in 1528 and imprisoned in the fort of Loh-kot or Lohrin (ancient Loharakotta) which was known for its height and strength.[59] He placed his own eldest son Ibrahim on the throne.

The struggle for the throne of Kashmir between Muhammad Shah and Fath Shah could have ceased on the latter's death in 1519 but it was not so. The unending rivalry among the leaders continued as before with each faction endeavouring to get power with a puppet king. The Sultan could be dethroned and a new one installed by the nobles or the party who commanded power. The energies and national resources were aimlessly frittered away only to settle scores. Apart from natural calamities like famines and floods, the people suffered consequences of political instability, change of kings and his aides at frequent occasions.

Ibrahim Shah (1528-29 A.D.)

Ibrahim Khan ascended the throne with the title of Ibrahim Shah I. Babar had by this time successfully laid the foundation of Mughal empire in India after his brilliant victory against Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526. Abdul Magre who was in Jammu at that time, obtained some help from Babar and invaded Kashmir. He defeated bitterly his chief rival Kachi Chak who was compelled to leave the country. Ibrahim Shah was dethroned and in place Nazuk Khan, the only surviving son of late Fath Shah was installed on the throne.

Nazuk Shah (1529-30 A.D.)

Nazuk Khan was proclaimed Sultan with the title of Nazuk Shah. Hardly a year passed, when his Chief Minister Abdul Magre released Muhammad Shah from prison, installed him on the throne in 1530 for the fourth time and Nazuk Shah was given the status of heir-apparent.

Muhammad Shah (1530-37 A.D.)—Fourth Reign

The enmity among the nobles had already paved the way for interference in the internal affairs of the State by foreigners. The latest instance in the series was that of Babar who had provided Abdul Magre a sizable and strong contingent under his commanders. The result was the installation of Nazuk Shah on the throne. His deposition only after a year or so might have offended the Mughals of Delhi and secondly, they must have heard much about the natural beauty of the valley of Kashmir through the commanders. Obviously they had cast covetous eyes on

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Kashmir. But unfortunately Babar could not get time to take the roots of his newly consolidated empire into the soil of Kashmir—the paradise on the earth. The inevitable death took him away on 26th December 1530. The responsibility fell on the shoulders of his succesors.

The first independent invasion of Mughals took place in 1531 after one and a half year of Muhammad Shah's reign on the fourth occasion. It was led by Kamran, the second son of Babar. He was already the master of Kabul and Kandhar. In fact he was devoid of ability and audacity and always played the part of an enemy even against his own brother, Humayun. His troops did not get any resistance till they occupied Nowshera and then entered the capital of Srinagar. But they resorted to indiscriminate killings, burning of houses and palaces. Their ruthless behaviour awakened the inner conscience of the people. The Magres and Chaks forgot their traditional jealousy and joined hands at the time of national calamity. After a tough fight at Athawajan—a place to the south of Shankaracharya hill, the Mughals were bitterly defeated and they retired the to plains. The leaders of both the factions which included Abdul Magre, Kachi Chak and Regi Chak, another fanatic Sunni leader, declared jointly Abdul Magre as the Prime Minister of Sultan Muhammad Shah.

Magres and Chaks headed by Abdul Magre and Kachi Chak once again showed their exemplary character in opposing the force of Abu Said Khan, Sultan of Kashghar (1514-33). The force was commanded by his second son, Sikandar Khan and his armyman, Mirza Haidar Dughlat (1499-1550). Mirza Haidar hailing from an important tribe of Mongols in Central Asia is also said to be the foster brother of emperor Humayun (1530-56).[60] He is also the famous author of *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*—a very important document dedicated to Abdul Rashid Khan, Sultan of Kashghar after the death of his father Sultan Said Khan in 1533.

After occupation of Ladakh and Baltistan, the Kashghari forces penetrated into the valley in 1533. They too inflicted terrible misery on the people and taking the best advantage of snowy days, the Kashmiri forces resisted their further onslaughts. First they met them in February near the famous spring of Mattan on Anantnag-Pahalgam road and then in March at Nagam—a locality on Srinagar-Charisharif road and about 18 kms from Srinagar proper. The Kashghari forces were defeated and were forced to make peace. They finally withdrew from the country in May 1533.

The despatch of the Kashghari forces was followed by a severe famine as a result of which many people died and many left the country.

It was for the first time in the history of Kashmir that the two rival factions of the society—Magres and Chaks jointly resisted the invasion of Mughals and Kashgharis and came out triumphant. Not only this, they co-operated in the recon-

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struction work. Sultan Muhammad Shah's last years of his fourth phase of the reign were peaceful. He died in 1537 and was succeeded by his son Shamas-ud-din.

Sultan Shamas-ud-din (1537-38 A.D.)

Shamas-ud-din ascended the throne with the blessings of his grandfather Kachi Chak who was elevated to the post of Prime Minister. Unfortunately, the unity between the two groups was short-lived and the enmity among the leaders again surfaced. Kachi Chak who was also the grandfather of the Sultan was the virtual ruler. He defeated the rival Magres at Sopore and in the year 1538, Sultan Shamas-ud-din died and was succeeded by his brother Ismail Shah.

Ismail Shah (1538-40 A.D.)

Ismail Shah ascended the throne with the title of Sultan Ismail Shah I. In his brief reign, the people were fed up with the policy of Kachi Chak who was the virtual ruler. Being a Shia and the follower of Mir Shamas-ud-din Iraqi, he forced the Sunnis and also Hindus to adopt Shia-Nurbakhshiya form of religion. The result was an open revolt against his intolerant religious policy. In the meantime the Sultan died and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Shah.

Ibrahim Shah II (1540 A.D.)

Ibrahim Shah II was destined to be on the throne for a very limited period. The Sunnies led by Magre nobles rose in an open revolt against Kachi Chak and they approached Mirza Haidar Dughlat for help in their drive to rout Kachi Chak. Kachi Chak also on his part approached Sher Shah Suri who had already driven Humayun out of India in May 1540. Mirza Haidar Dughlat reached Kashmir and occupied it in November 1540. Kachi Chak was dislodged and forced to leave the valley. Ibrahim Shah II was deposed and in his place Nazuk Shah was placed on the throne for the second time.

Nazuk Shah (1540-51 A.D.)—Second Reign

Nazuk Shah who continued to be the heir-apparent after his deposition in 1530 was again restored on the throne by Mirza Haidar Dughlat who occupied the valley without causing any bloodshed. He had not earned any goodwill on his last visit to Kashmir (1532-33) and in order to give proof of his sincerity, he showed the Sultan due respect even if he remained merely a figure head and all the powers of the administration were in the hands of Mirza Haidar himself.

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The second conquest of the valley by Mirza Haidar was undertaken with the knowledge of Humayun who had to follow him. But after his departure to Kashmir, Sher Shah defeated Humayun in the battle of Kanauj on May 17, 1540. Humayun ran away. Deserted by his own brother and nearest relatives, Humayun proceeded to Persia instead of Kashmir but Mirza Haidar continued his march towards the valley by taking a lengthy route via Punch and Toshmaidan pass. Mirza Haidar reaching there in November of the same year, took Abdul Magre and a fanatic Sunni leader Regi Chak in his administration.

Hardly a year and a half passed, when Kachi Chak approached Sher Shah Suri at Delhi and obtained his help for dislodging Mirza Haidar. On the home front, Mirza Haidar was mentally upset by the death of his powerful noble, his ally, Abdul Magre. He filled up the post of Prime Minister by appointing his son Hassan Magre. Thus without having any rivalry in the royal court, he was ultimately successful in inflicting crushing defeat upon Kachi Chak and Afghan soldiers supplied by Sher Shah Suri. This victory regained the lost prestige of Humayun, though in exile, since this time Mirza Haider Dughlat had conquered Kashmir on behalf of Humayun and even struck coins in his name.

Mirza Haidar showed equal respect to Shias and Nurbakhshiyas. This attitude caused resentment to fanatic Sunni leader Regi Chak. He joined hands with Kachi Chak—a sworn enemy of Mirza. In 1544, he defeated them at Gulmarg where they had camped. Then they left for Rajouri. Soon after both of them died.

Mirza was now free from internal and external dangers. He started for the conquest of neighbouring regions. His campaign against a Hindu region of Kishtwar was an utter failure and there was a heavy loss of Mughal forces. He, however, compensated this loss by conquering Baltistan, Ladakh, Rajouri and Pakhli (modern Hazara district). All these conquered territories were put under the charge of capable Mughal officers.

Mirza's next course was to strengthen diplomatic ties with foreign powers. In 1547, he entered into friendship with Abdul Rashid Khan, a sworn enemy of the Dughlats. In order to give proof of his regards towards him, he dedicated his book entitled *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* to him. It is a history of Mughals of Central Asia and also gives a meagre account of Kashmir of his days.

Regi Chak's betrayal had tremendously offended him and he turned a fanatic Sunni. He treated Shia-Nurbakhshiyas ruthlessly. He razed the tomb of Mir Shamas-ud-din at Zadibal to the ground. His son and other followers were executed. Even sufis and Hindus were not shown any favour. His intention was to do away with the creed of 'infidelity'.

Mirza's horrible behaviour with Shias and Nurbakhshiyas made their top leaders like Daulat Khan Chak and Ghazi Chak son of Kachi Chak to leave the country

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and explore the possibility of getting some help from Islam Shah who had succeeded Sher Shah in 1545 on the throne of Delhi and his enemy, Haibat Khan, the next claimant on the throne of Delhi. By his diplomacy and statesmanship, Mirza created a bracing atmosphere with both of them. He impressed Islam Shah by sending gifts of saffron and beautiful shawls and Kashmir silks. As a token of goodwill and friendship, the representatives of Mirza Haidar visited Isalm Shah's court occasionally. Similarly, Haibat Khan, Governor of Punjab at that time was chased by Islam Shah himself in order to destroy him. Haibat Khan reached Rajouri where Chak leaders met him and advised him to invade Kashmir. Mirza Haidar blocked the road and thus frustrated their evil design. Haibat Khan faced financial crises, and Mirza took the opportunity by concluding peace with him. He gave Haibat a sizable amount of money and he left the idea of invasion for ever.

Mirza's intolerant religious policy caused widespread discontentment among the local population. The Mughal Governor of Baltistan was killed. Other territories of Ladakh and Pakhli witnessed uprisings. Kashmiri rebel leaders took an opportunity to dislodge him and occupied the fort at Khanpur about 16 kms to the south of Srinagar. He made a surprise attack on them but was killed.

Mirza Haidar Dughlat, though a usurper, was courageous, brave and was gifted with a sense of diplomacy which enabled him to rule the land for fifteen years but his fanatic and religious bigotry hindered his process of establishing the Mughal rule in the valley. Besides, he began to lean more and more on outsiders and alienated Kashmiris in all walks of life. This hastened his downfall.

Mirza Haidar Dughlat's place was taken over by Idi Raina who took over as Prime Minister. His power was, however, challenged by Daulat Chak and was compelled to leave the country and died in exile. Daulat Chak seized the power and deposed Nazuk Shah and placed Ismail Shah II, grandson of Muhammad Shah on the throne.

Sultan Ismail Shah II (1551-54 A.D.)

Under Sultan Ismail Shah, Daulat Chak, contrary to Mirza Haidar Dughlat's religious policy, made everybody free to follow his religion. He revived Nurbakhshiya creed. The mausoleum of Mir Shamas-ud-din at Zadibal was rebuilt. The Hindus had to pay the tax and then avail of the freedom to worship.

Daulat Chak conquered Ladakh when its ruler neglected to pay tribute to the Sultan of Kashmir after the death of Mirza Haidar Dughlat. A similar campaign was undertaken against Baltistan.

In 1554, the valley witnessed a great earthquake which continued for a few days. This gave a great setback to Daulat Chak. The people had to leave their

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residential houses and pass days under canvass. This was followed by the death of Sultan, and his son Habib Shah ascended the throne.

Habib Shah (1554-55 A.D.)

Under Sultan Habib Shah, Daulat Chak continued to be the highest official in authority. Unfortunately he fell prey to his personal weaknesses. He married the mother of young and fearless leader, Ghazi Chak which infuriated the latter and he thought of eliminating the former. Through a shepherd, he was caught while fishing and his eyes were gouged out. He was thus made incapable and unfit for political moves.

Ghazi Chak now was at the helm of affairs. He deposed Habib Shah who in his opinion was not worth to be a king. The deposed Sultan died in 1573 which is confirmed from an inscription on a rectangular stone used in the construction of the enclosure wall on the east of Zain-ul-Abidin's mother's tomb (Badshah monument) in the heart of Srinagar. However, as was evident Ghazi Chak proclaimed himself the Sultan of Kashmir with the title of Nasir-ud-din Mohammad Ghazi Shah and thus brought about the end of Shahmiri Sultanate.

Ascendancy of Chaks

The Chaks were no strangers. Like Shahmir, they with their leader, Langar Chak had entered the valley in the reign of king Suhadeva (1301-20). They were physically well-built and turned to be good soldiers. They defeated the evil designs of Babar—the founder of Mughal empire in India when he sent his son Kamran to invade Kashmir. Since the time of their entry into the valley they had passed through various phases of vicissitudes, turmoil and agony at the hands of political and religious rivals. However, they exerted great influence in the power politics of the valley, and could enthrone or dethrone a king during the long period of their survival. In this way they played a leading role in the swift changing political and religious events of the valley during the 15th and 16th centuries. It was now their descendant, Ghazi Chak, who was ultimately destined to hold sceptre in his own hands.

The Chak rulers also did not bring any solace to the troubled country. Instead their mutual jealousy, bitterness and continued antagonism between Shia Muslims and Sunnis paved an easy way for occupation of the valley by the Mughals.

Ghazi Chak (1555-62 A.D.)

Ghazi Chak, the first independent ruler of the Chaks ascended the throne of

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Kashmir under the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Ghazi Shah Chak. He disastrously defeated the disgraced noble of Akbar's court Shah Abul Maali who had collected some Mughal and Kashmiri soldiers to invade Kashmir in the year 1558.

The reign of Sultan Ghazi Shah coincided with the reign of emperor Akbar (1556-1605) who created an empire for himself with the support of his nobles and generals and gave it an excellent administration. He was keen to occupy the beautiful valley of Kashmir and was waiting for a suitable opportunity.

The emperor Akbar had learnt about the brutal killings, bloodshed and anarchy let loose in the beautiful valley of Kashmir and wanted to enforce a rule of law. The Sultan did not spare even children from inflicting severe punishment which included gouging out eyes, cutting of fingers and hands. Akbar took immediate measures to set the things in order. He sent some troops headed by Mirza Qara Bahadur, cousin of Mirza Haidar Dughlat to invade Kashmir.

Mirza Qara Bahadur was a tactless person. He reached Rajouri in the summer of 1561. There he met the disgruntled nobles of Sultan who were ready to help him but soon most of them deserted him when they came to know about indiscipline in his army. The Sultan on his part closed all the passes for entry into the valley and himself marched to Rajouri and gave a stiff fight to Mughals who got a crushing defeat. Both the emperor and the nobles were demoralised. The nobles once again rose in rebellion in Kishtwar and Ladakh. The Sultan sent his own son Adam Khan to Ladakh with a large army but returned back without facing the enemy. The infuriated Sultan then marched himself to Ladakh. He could have easily come victorious but had to give up his continued campaign in Ladakh when he came to know that his enemies in the court, his own son Shankar Chak and brother had joined together and had disturbed the peaceful atmosphere in the capital. He started back but the hazardous journey and cold terribly affected his already leprous body. He lost his eyesight and fingers. He was both mentally and physically upset and abdicated the throne in 1562 in favour of his brother Hasain Shah Chak who in his opinion was a better candidate among the lot.

Hasain Shah Chak (1562-69)

Hasain Shah Chak ascended the throne with the title of Muhammad Nasir-ud-din Hasain Shah Ghazi. He could not get peace at home. His own son joined hands against him with Ahmad Khasn, the son of the former king Ghazi Shah. They were supported by Sultan's well-known rebel chief, Khan-i-Zaman. Sultan's ring of spies headed by his chief body-guard foiled the conspiracy. The rebel chief was hanged, Ahmad Khan's eyes were gouged out and his own body-guard chief, Masud Nayak, was suitably rewarded.

Akbar again made an attempt to set right the rule of law in the troubled State.

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He sent in 1568 his two envoys, Mir Muquim and Mir Yakub to the court of Sultan. They were well received at Srinagar and were given all the comforts required for their stay in the valley. The peace was again disturbed due to dispute that arose among the intemperable but prominent Mullas of the two groups of Shias and Sunnies. This led to the execution of one of the Shia leaders—Yusuf Yander. Akbar's envoy, Mir Muquim expressed his resentment as he was a zealous Shia himself. Soon after the envoys left Kashmir and on their departure were given many presents. The king also sent his daughter for the marriage of emperor's son Salim. In the meantime, Akbar was informed about the involvement and conduct of his envoys in the valley. He hanged them after their return and also returned the presents along with the Sultan's daughter back to Srinagar. Shocked at this insult, the Sultan followed the footsteps of his predecessor in abdicating the throne in favour of his brother in the year 1569.

Ali Shah (1569-79 A.D.)

Ali Shah on ascending the throne of Kashmir assumed the title of Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Ali Badshah. He was mild and a king of secular sentiments. His reign was also disturbed by civil disturbances like those of his predecessors. However, the significant feature of his reign was the second mission of emperor Akbar in the year 1573. The mission consisted of Mulla Ashqi and Qazi Sadr-ud-din. The Sultan received them with honour and dignity and in fact provided the ground for considering the valley as a vassal of Mughal empire. He proclaimed Akbar as his sovereign and read the *khutba* and minted coins in his name bearing the legend '*Akbar Badshah*.'[61] In token of his lasting allegiance, he sent Muhammad Qasim as his envoy to the Mughal court and also offered his niece for prince Salim.

The valley passed through an acute crisis during the last years of the Sultan's reign. In 1576 because of early snowfall, the paddy still standing in the fields was completely damaged. This resulted in a famine which took many lives and many left the country. This was followed by a fire which completely gutted a part of the city.[62] Before the Sultan could take measures for rehabilitation of the subjects, he died while playing polo in Idgah ground in the year 1579. His brother Abdal Chak claimed the throne but was killed. On the vacant throne, the Sultan's son Yusuf Shah succeeded his father.

Yusuf Shah (1579 A.D.)—First Reign

After the death of his uncle, he ascended the throne under the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Yusuf Badshah Ghazi. Yusuf Shah was keen to roam in woods, waterfalls, and meadows and in one of his such sojourns he came across a very

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charming peasant woman Habba Khatun popularly known as Zoon or Zooni. Married to an uneducated villager, her domestic life was miserable. She had a natural gift of singing songs which she composed herself while grazing the cattle in the fields of her birth place village Chandrahar near Pampur. Yusuf was attracted both by her beauty and sweet voice and married her. They, however, lived happily for some time.[63] Soon after, Yusuf Shah neglected his duties as a king and was given to a luxurious way of living. This gave a chance to nobles to rise in revolt against him. One such personality was Sayyid Mubarak Khan, his Wazir, who became the most powerful and strong man and challenged the Sultan. The tactless Sultan was defeated in the fight which took place at Idgah ground and was deposed by his enemy Sayyid Mubarak Khan hardly within a period of two months of his accession.

Sayyid Mubarak Khan (1579 A.D.)

The reign of the new Sultan was worse than that of Yusuf Shah. He was haughty and being new to the throne, he harassed the Chaks so much so that they were forced to rise in revolt against him and compelled him to abdicate the throne in favour of the cousin of the deposed king—Lohar Chak.

Lohar Chak (1579-80 A.D.)

Lohar Chak brought peace and economic stability to the people. Unfortunately he was not destined to rule for more than a year. Yusuf Shah acted swiftly, presented himself before Akbar on January 3, 1580 requesting him for refuge and help. Akbar who was looking for such an opportunity, readily agreed. He sent Mughal forces under Raja Man Singh to restore Yusuf Shah to the throne of Kashmir. The Kashmir nobles and the reigning Sultan, Lohar Chak became afraid of the Mughal invasion and contacted Yusuf Chak with the message that if he returned to the valley without the Mughal force, Lohar Chak would abdicate the throne in his favour. He believed them and left Lahore with a small force. He was confronted at Sopore on November 8, 1580 by Lohar Chak but he lost to Yusuf Chak. Lohar Chak was captured and imprisoned. The throne once again went into the hands of Yusuf Chak.

Yusuf Shah (1580-86 A.D.)—Second Reign

On his restoration for the second time, Sultan Yusuf Shah abolished all types of taxes, geared up administration, and aimed at stability in governing the land. But he was surrounded by his enemies among whom the two deposed Sultans were promi-

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nent. While he scooped out the eyes of Lohar Chak and put him behind the bars along with his followers, he entered into matrimonial alliance with Sayyid Mubarak Khan and thus silenced him.

Yusuf Shah was convinced that to go against the wishes of emperor Akbar was to court despair and disappointment but still the situation went out of his hands. Akbar was already angered by his doings when he did not utilise the force placed at his disposal in 1580 on his own request so as to recover his lost throne. In 1581, Akbar sent two envoys to Sultan with the letter that if he at all considered himself as the devoted and sincere protege, he should have presented himself at the royal court. He received the Mughal envoys with respect and placed the letter on his turban as a mark of respect. He then sent back the ambassadors with costly presents along with his minor son Haidar Khan. The emperor was not convinced of Sultan's sincerity and sent back his son in the following year. Thereafter repeated calls were received by the Sultan from the royal camps and in the year 1585, he sent his eldest son, Yakub Khan with rich presents to Akbar with the request that in view of the hazardous journey, his personal presence before him might be excused. The emperor misunderstood his plea and thought that the Sultan deliberately avoided his personal presence. The Sultan became alarmed when his son, Yakub Khan returned from the royal Mughal court. Akbar became apprehensive of Yusuf Shah's deliriousness. On December 20, 1585 Akbar sent a force of Mughal army under the command of Raja Bhagwan Dass, Mirza Shah Rukh, Shah Quli Mehram and others through Pakhali route which connected Kashmir via Muzafarrabad-Abottabad-Mansehra road.[64] Quite unwillingly and compelled by his own nobles Yusuf Shah sent his forces to fight against the Mughals at Buhiasa (ancient *Bolyasaka*)—about eight kilometres from Baramulla. Nature came to the rescue of Kashmiris. Severe cold, heavy rains, snow storms and lack of foodstuffs took heavy toll of Mughal forces and animals. The situation compelled Raja Bhagwan Dass to negotiate with the Sultan and wrote to him that no doubt the Mughals had suffered reverses because of rough weather, but on receipt of fresh reinforcements another attempt would be made which would prove disastrous for the Kashmiris. He further advised the Sultan that he in his own interests should present himself before the Mughal emperor. Despite resistance from his nobles, the Sultan secretly left his palace and on February 14, 1586 presented himself at the Mughal camp where Akbar treated him as a political prisoner. This cowardly action of the emperor was taken seriously by the nobles of Yusuf Shah, and they proclaimed his son Yakub Khan as the king and continued with their struggle against the Mughals. The Mughals again suffered heavy losses but the landlords of the region where the fight was going on sided with the invaders. It is only then that the Kashmiris lost heart and both sides showed their willingness to conclude the peace terms. According to the terms of the

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peace, it was agreed that Yusuf Shah would retain his throne, Akbar's name should be read in *Khutba*, coins should be struck in the name of Akbar and the revenue from the mint, saffron, shawl etc should be paid to the imperial treasury. On the conclusion of the peace, the Mughals withdrew from Kashmir. On the assurance of Raja Bhagwan Dass for his safety and return, Yakub Shah accompanied him to pay his personal homage to Akbar on April 7, 1586. The emperor did not approve the peace treaty and also ordered for the imprisonment of the Sultan. This treacherous imprisonment was a naked violation of the treaty and remained as a dark blot on the character of the chivalrous Akbar. Raja Bhagwan Dass was dismayed over the conduct of Akbar and in order to save his honour struck himself with a dagger.[65]

Yusuf Shah remained a political prisoner for two years. Even when he was set free, he was not allowed to return to Kashmir. He led a meloncholy life under the scorching heat of Bihar plains. The separation from his beloved wife distressed him most and he died on September 11, 1592. Habba Khatun also could not bear separation from her lord and died as a hermitess. Both of them, however, were witness to the happenings in their homeland after Yakub Shah surrendered before the Mughal emperor on his own.

Like Bahadur Shah Zaffar, the last king of Mughal dynasty, Yusuf Shah Chak was not destined to die in his own country. His grave also remained unidentified. It has now been located by Mr. M.Y. Taing, the Director General, Culture, J & K State at Biswak, Bihar. The tomb stone was remodelled and a befitting memorial stone installed on January 19th, 1977 by Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla when he was the Chief Minister, Jammu and Kashmir State.

Yakub Shah (1586-89 A.D.)

Soon after the departure of Yusuf Shah in February 1586 against the wishes of his nobles, his son who was proclaimed as the Sultan in absence of his father, assumed the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Yakub Badshah Ghazi. He was different from his father. He was a fanatic Shia, ill tempered but a brave fighter. He and his nobles continued to challenge the imperial authority.

The Chaks had alienated Hindus by their repressive policy towards them and they did not give any support to Yakub Shah when he had to face the Mughal General Qasim Khan in June 1586. The ministers of the new Sultan also did not encourage him. The result was that he fled to Kishtwar and Qasim Khan was finally successful in entering the city of Srinagar on October 16, 1586. Akbar was proclaimed as the sovereign of Kashmir.

Kashmiris did not still acknowledge the occupation of Kashmir by Mughals as final. The nobles who earlier deserted Yakub Shah joined hands together and once

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again rose against Mir Qasim. The people were also tired of the oppressive measures launched by the Mughal General. The result was that Mir Qasim was recalled and in his place Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizwi, one of the confidants of Akbar was appointed. He reached Srinagar in the middle of 1588 without any opposition. Most of the companions deserted Yakub Shah once again and he fled back to Kishtwar. Being an experienced man of strong will and scheming, the new Mughal officer, Mirza Yusuf Khan won the hearts of the local people and also some of the nobles. The people were deeply impressed by his liberal policy. He then gave a crushing defeat to Shams Chak—the most rebellious noble next to Yusuf Chak. He submitted to the Mughal Governor and was sent to the royal court where he was treated favourably. He gave his daughter in marriage to prince Salim, the future Jehangir.

Akbar was impatient to be in the charming valley. The main work of annexation of the valley had been completed. He started on his journey towards the valley and reached Srinagar on June 5, 1589. Under changed circumstances, Yakub Shah had no other alternative but to surrender before Akbar. He submitted his petition through his brother Aiba Khan in which he had pleaded that he repented over his rudeness which he did on account of the intoxication of youth and intimacy with wicked men. He further prayed that His Majesty should send him the slipper which he would place over his crown and thus prostrate at the holy threshold.[66] Akbar accepted Yakub's apology and sent him to Bihar as a virtual prisoner like his father in the custody of Raja Man Singh. Thus the long struggle of the Kashmiris to maintain their independence against the foreign rule ended.

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    Durga Puja is celebrated twice in a year during spring and autumn seasons. On both the occasions it is perfomed for nine days and is directly linked with the worship of Durga—Mother Goddess.

    Vyth Truvah was held after sunset to celebrate the birthday of river Jhelum (*Vyth* in Kashmiri). Prayers were held on either sides of the river. Milk and flowers were offered. Earthen lamps were lit after sunset and offered to the river after placing these on *Shali* grass rings. The widely expanded surface of the river bedecked with these lighted lamps, moving in quick motions, presented a very fascinating view which caught the attention of Emperor Jehangir also. He took pleasure of this festival in moving about in a boat.
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metres in length and 0.30 metres in height (at the centre). It was placed at the place known as *Bhuvaneshvari* at the foot of the hill where the stream coming from the hill top emerges. Laukika era and the date corresponds to December 3, Friday, 1428. The king's name is recorded as Jayanolabdenashah (Sultan Zainul-abidin) son of illustrious Sakandra (Sikandar). The ascetic is named as *Gammatoshodka* for whose medication a hermitage was erected here by a merchant (named) *Purnaka*, son of *Suva*. The ascetic who had come from the castle of Jayapida (Anderkot) found his way to Shiva after the meditation here.

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9
Architecture of Sultanate Period

Muslim domination of the valley started with its usurpation by Shahmir in the beginning of the 14th century. It was a *coup d'etat* and not a conquest. He or his successors had to rely on the support of the indigenous Hindu nobles for the stability of the rule and the artisans for raising their religious or secular buildings. The earliest specimens of religious structures are represented by mosques (places of worship) and tombs or Ziarats (the resting places of the dead). The secular buildings included houses, palaces, forts, wells, gardens etc.

The Muslims had to face the period of stress, strain and storm because in the beginning they were far too few as compared to Hindus who represented the mass population. It is because of this that they did not initiate an architecture of their own and all they did was to utilise the material of spoiled or disused Hindu temples. This was done only to create the structure mainly of a religious character which they needed most.

The story of the Muslim architecture in the valley is the combination of the old and the new. The zealous missionaries tried to retain the then prevalent traditions of architecture which belonged to Buddhist and Hindu periods. The natural beauty, fertile valley, accommodating nature of the people and above all the geographical isolation induced the Muslims to adopt a style of architecture which suited them most under changed conditions, time and space.

The style of architecture associated with the domination of the valley by Muslims in the 14th and 15th centuries is almost of wood and bricks which received a distinction of its own. There are indications of the indigenous wood and brick architecture prevalent in the valley prior to the occupation of the valley by the Muslims. One such instance is substantiated by an epigraphical evidence (1197) found in the village of Arigom (ancient Hadigrama) in Badgam district. It informs us that to house the image of Avalokiteshvara, a brick shrine was built instead of the wooden shrine which was burnt down in the reign of Jayasimha (1128-55).[1] Still very few wooden monuments in their original style of construction have sur-

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vived the ravages of fire which had been the cause of great havoc at frequent intervals because of its inflammable material. Besides, the material could not stand the vagaries of weather in Kashmir which necessitated the repairs or the replacement of the material off and on leaving behind little originality in their design. Compared to religious structures, the secular monuments in wood or brick are hardly met. These, with the change in the life style of the people and new style of constructions, have totally disappeared. The religious monuments of the period marked by mosques, tombs or Ziarats, still however, represent a change in the architecture of the time. The architectural expression chiefly executed in wood because of its superabundance in the valley is in a stage of transition between the pre-Sultanate phase and the Mughal architecture that followed. In a mosque of the period, one comes across some of the traditional elements of the Buddhist monuments like the prayer chamber, and a pyramidal roof in tiers with a slender spire above and an expressive open pavilion which serves as minar or *mazina* for the muezzin to summon the devotees to prayer. Except the open pavilion, the tomb or the mortuary chamber with a grave of the pious man in the middle carry similar features as that of the mosque. The ready-made material of the temples after their spoilation served as a sound foundation for these structures and the superstructures over them were raised of wood and bricks. The two storeyed mosque of Shah Hamadan at Srinagar is the typical specimen of this style of architecture in the valley.

Situated on the right bank of the river Jhelum in the heart of city of Srinagar above Zainakadal, the mosque of Shah Hamadan better known as Khanqah-i-Maulla was originally the shrine of Goddess Kali. The spring dedicated to the Goddess is situated within the Khanqah itself and its water flows down outside the structure where Hindus offer worship to mother Kali. It was selected by Sayyid Ali Hamadani—the first great Muslim missionary of Hamadan who entered Kashmir with disciples during the reign of Sultan Qutub-ud-din (1374-89). His son and successor, Mir Sayyid Hamadani who arrived in the valley in 1393 during the reign of Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413) has in his historical document *Waqf-nama of Khanqah Maulla* dated January 11, 1396, elaborately detailed out the limits of the Khanqah, its situation, its religious importance, the name of the custodian and the means of its maintenance etc. Here a very impressive kind of mosque with superstructure in wood of a considerable height—the first structure of its kind in the valley was raised subsequently by Sultan Sikandar himself. An inscription carved on its door gives the year of the death of Sayyid Ali Hamadani as 1384.

The mosque has its foundations composed of ancient temple materials. Barring its verandah extentions, it is in plan a square. Over it, the walls of the lower portion of the structure are formed of logs, trimmed square and then laid in alternate

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courses. The projections under the eaves are also of logs laid crosswise. Their butt ends serve as rudimentary form of dentil course. The superstructure also in wood is comparatively lighter and is represented by arcades, varandahs and porticos. The pyramidal roof crowning the whole structure is in three tiers and carries a distinctive style of its own. It is marked by well laid out planks covered by a layer of birch bark over which a layer of earth mixed with grass is laid out. This provided a safest arrangement to save it from rain and snow. In flowery season, the tulips and iris over it provided an enchanting scenery. The openings between the balks of the structure are filled with small, dressed bricks and lattice work. The entire roofing material now stands replaced covering the structure by corrugated tin sheets. Obviously the original waterproof strata adopted by Kashmiris for such buildings or even for the residential houses has lost its ground. The architectural highlight is further provided by the open pillared pavilion crowning the entire structure of the mosque. Over it rises the steeple with a pinnacle which gives it a characteristic perception of a Sikhara or a spire of a Buddhist or a Hindu monument.

The mosque of Shah Hamadan which is in two storeys, carries architectural embellishment in the interior of one of the only large hall on the gound floor as against the upper storey which is plain. By providing small chambers on southern and northern sides, fourteen in number, the size of the hall now 63′ by 43′ originally a square in plan, has been narrowed down. The ceiling of the hall is supported by four wooden pillars 20′ in height with an ornamental dado and other decorations. However, the mosque with its tapering eight-sided pillars with foliated bases and capitals, its arched and recessed *mehrab*, its panelled walls and painted ceiling illustrates an expression of its artistic treatment. The balconies in the upper storey are approached by two ladders provided at the sides.

It was twice destroyed by fire—once in 1479 and the second time in 1731. Sultan Hassan Shah (1472-84) repaired it on the first occasion and the second time Abul Barakat Khan, Deputy Governor of Mughals repaired the mosque in 1733 when he took up his post for the fourth time (1733-37).

A remarkable and prodigious display of such early structures is observable at Jama Masjid near Nowhatta in Srinagar. It is the developed form of wooden architecture in Kashmir valley. It has a chequed history and in spite of repeated reconstructions and changes, the original style continued to be adopted as far as possible. It was due to its prestige and ancient lineage.

Originally laid out by Sultan Sikandar as early as 1400 under the supervision of an experienced and a skilled artisan Sayyid Sadr-ud-din, it was enlarged by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) who attached to it an Islamic school also. In 1479, it was reduced to ashes by the devastating fire and its reconstruction was started by the then reigning Sultan Hassan Shah (1472-84). Since he died before its completion,

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the work was successfully executed in 1503 by Malik Ibrahim Magre—a prominent and powerful leader in the reigns of Muhammad Shah and Fateh Shah when Kashmir was passing through a civil war between these two monarchs on the one hand and a struggle for power between Kashmiri nobles and Sayyids on the other. Again in 1619 when emperor Jahangir was in the valley, a severe conflagration broke out which destroyed the mosque and the surrounding residential houses. On his initiative, the mosque was rebuilt by Malik Haidar Chadura, a historian and the author of *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*. The history of the mosque till this date is recorded in an inscription on the southern gate—being the principal entrance of the mosque which was erected about this time. On the right wall of this gate is also engraved the royal *farman* (Imperial order) of emperor Shahjahan (1627-1658) on a block of black marble. Immediate cause for its publicity was to put an end to the autocratic and oppressive rule of Itiqad Khan, Mughal Governor of Kashmir (1622-32). It also records the ways and means to which other greedy and unscrupulous provincial governors resorted to amass wealth. Its historical importance lies in the fact that it gives a proof of Shahjahan's zeal for establishing peace, prosperity and an excellent administration to the people at large.

In 1674 during the reign of emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707), the mosque caught fire for the third time. He rebuilt it and to avoid recurrence of fire, the houses around it were pulled down. During the Pathan rule (1753-1819), the structure was twice repaired, once by Haji Karim Dad Khan in 1190 and second time by Sardar Azad Khan in 1207. During Sikh regime (1820) which followed the Pathan rule, entry into the mosque was restricted.

In Dogra regime, attempts were made to repair the mosque. During 1917-25, under the patronage of the then State Government, a high power committee of Muslims came into being. Substantially aided by the His Highness's Government, major repairs were undertaken at a cost of thirteen and a half lakh of rupees. The Muslim Trust continued with the work of repairs and maintenance even after the independence also. On the whole, the originality of the mosque was not altered. A serious departure was made in 1953 when its roof laid out with birch bark on wooden planks and then covered with mud was replaced by corrugated sheets. Such an arrangement by the religious body continues even now though the monument has been declared as a monument of national importance in 1958.

The grand mosque of Jama Masjid even in its present condition, reflects a remarkable current of religious fervour witnessed in the valley soon after its occupation by the Muslims. The wide colonnades around the open courtyard are nothing but the reminiscent of the architectural magnificence of the Stupa-courts of the Buddhist monasteries or the cellular peristyle of the Hindu temples. The stone foundation of the mosque and its associated structures one of which till recent days

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stood on its south-east side confirms that a grand Hindu temple occupied the site of the present Jama Masjid.[2]

The type of its architecture, its massiveness, complexity, size and perfection of design makes it one of the most extraordinary achievements of early Islamic art in the valley. In conception, it is of the orthodox mosque plan, comprising a courtyard surrounded by arched arcades, beautiful naves, pyramidal roofs and steeples. The pillared aisles and cloisters add to the glory and magnificence of the monument.

The outstanding characteristic feature of the mosque is the brick work of remarkably fine quality, distinct externally by its enormous height of retaining wall reinforced intermittently by means of wooden beams inserted in the walls so as to provide it with stability. Besides the beams, there are other wooden elements notably doorways, open steeples with moulded finials and the ventilators some of which bear *Jali* decorations. All these components give it a graceful look. In the middle of each side of the outer wall are the large and dependent shrines of *ziarats* or *minars* having a square frontage and containing an archway surmounted by a series of pyramidal roofs crowned by a high pinnacle. These serve as entrance halls to the interior of the mosque of the ground floor on north, south and east sides. The principal entrance is on the south. The real greatness of the wooden architectural conception lies in the treatment of the pillared chambers or aisles or cloisters connecting the roof and the four minars. The hall on the western side is more spacious and predominant as it is the nave of the sanctuary. The minar also on this side is of larger dimensions than the other three. The two stair cases leading to the roof on either sides of mosque are surmounted by brick domes. In the sanctuary on this side, the arched *mehrab*—the fundamental requirement of the mosque or the symbol of the 'direction' of the Faith is as usual provided in the centre of the wall within a double range of tall wooden pillars. But the real glory and impressive grandeur of wooden architecture is found in large array of lofty pillars each made out of a single log varying from 7.6 metres to 15.2 metres in height. These colonnades of great heights invest the prayer chambers running around the entire building with graceful architectural composition. The spacious lawn (25′×234′) with a tank (34′×33′) in its centre adds to the dignity of the mosque.

This earliest principal religious shrine of Muslims is the best illustration of a combination of several architectural styles added to it due to repeated restorations but still it has maintained its original fabric of construction. The stately proportions, the design and the extraordinary skill utilized in erection of such an immense building reflect the imaginative genius of the indigenous artisans who had to switch over to the buildings of the shrines befitting the aspirations of the zealous rulers and the people of the new faith. The introduction of small domes over the stairs could be initially attributed to king Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) whose elaborately designed

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domed structures surpass in architectural excellence of his predecessors not only in Kashmir but in India as well. His unique artistic structural achievements entitle him to be the forerunner of Shahjahan (1627-58) whose buildings like Taj—the queen architecture, Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas and Jama Masjid at Delhi and Moti Masjid at Agra evoked universal admiration.

King Zain-ul-Abidin remembered in history as a tolerant king did not hesitate to convert prominent temples of those days into tombs or mosques. The best illustration of this type is the tomb of his mother, Mera Devi which undoubtedly was originally a Hindu temple.

Situated on the right side of the river Jhelum below Zaina Kadal—a bridge named after the king, the mother's tomb is commonly known after his pet name as 'Badshah Monument'. The basement, filleted torus cornice, trefoiled arched entrances, sculptural motifs within the triangular pediments, long array of niches with pointed arches still standing on the ancient shrine to the north of the monument, the enclosure wall and above all the exposure of a stone head of Shiva with a diadem datable to 6th-7th century in recent years leaves no doubt that the original site contained pre-Muslim shrines. While probing the south-west corner of the structure in the year 1978-79, a standardization of procedure of Hindu temples was observed to have been maintained in laying out the foundation of the shrine. The lowest course of the foundation is hardly 1.5 metres deep from the present surface and is directly laid on the clayed material and the next courses only four in number have been placed one over the above without the use of mortar. In general all the pre-Muhammadan buildings are of dry order.[3]

The temple has been named by some earlier writers as the shrine of 'Maha Shri'[4] which lacks any authenticity. However, it has been strongly argued that the upper portion of the structure was dismantled to make room for the erection of a tomb according to Islamic needs.[5] It then points out that the temple upto the base was intentionally dismantled by the Sultan himself which does not hold good. He did everything to restore confidence among the Hindus of the land and especially revived the temple building activities. Encouraged by his unique method of communal harmony, many of the Brahmans who had earlier accepted Islam returned to their own faith.[6] There is, therefore, every reason to believe that the superstructure of the monument had given way or had fallen to ruin because of the iconoclastic zeal of the Sultan's predecessors. It goes to his credit that he really brought about a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures. In doing so, he occupies a unique position in the history of Kashmir. He utilised the intact parts of the shattered structures and that too in the present case to enshrine the remains of his mother whom he loved most. The superstructure raised over the ancient basement was crowned with bulbous domes or cupolas and thus preserved the characteristics of the old along with

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the new. It shows his attachment in preserving much of its ancient heritage. Lavish expenditure on funeral or religious shrines was against the teaching of Islam. Except the essential items every other building was considered to be burdensome. God wanted to make the burden of men light and easy. Prophet Mohammad had also said, 'God has not bestowed wealth on us to clothe brick and stone'.[7] But in course of time, brilliant exposition of styles was adopted as a symbol of faith and thereby express a feeling of profound submission by the builder and the craftsmen to Allah—the supreme and the sole sovereign of the universe.

Badshah Monument is a marvellous innovation of early Muslim architecture in the valley of Kashmir. It is unique in its design, size and composition. The tomb chamber is approached through a flight of steps towards the river side and also through a double pedimented and trefoiled gateway both belonging to a Hindu temple from the road side. Internally the side walls with a height of 8.50 metres are constructed in bricks with mortar. In fact the brick masonry with the use of lime as a binding material distinguishes the pre-Muslim buildings from the Muslim structures.[8] The original square chamber was converted into octagon with the aid of 'squinch' method. By adopting this method, small arches were projected across the upper parts of the angles of the square chamber so as to not only convert its shape into an octagon but also provide a convenient base for raising the domes. The side of the converted octagonal tomb chamber internally measures 7.15 metres. Eight semi-circular pointed squinches have been provided at each angle of the octagon and four squinches in the middle of each cardinal side thus raising the number to twelve. In addition to these, the four window openings raise the number of pointed arches to sixteen so that no portion of the structure is left unsupported for the provision of five cupolas which crown the entire structure and thus give it a status of a large and stately mausoleum. It was the beginning of the brilliant phase of domed structures in India as also elsewhere.

The crowning glory of the monument lies in the shape, volume and elevation of the domes and in the form of the drums on which these are placed. Dome was considered to be a necessary structure of funeral architecture. The erection of domes requires profound knowledge of mathematics and skill. The designers have to be proficient in calculating minute details. The superstructure composed of five domes, the larger one being in the centre conveys an impression of an unrelenting dignity in a structure of this order. The drum of the central dome is composed of two separate shells, an outer and inner, with an appreciable space between. Such a structural procedure, an earliest feature in India, has enabled the ceiling of the dome inside to be placed lower in relation to the chamber it covers and it has in no way disturbed the majestic effect of the exterior. Its drum is fluted, formed by semi-circular brick mouldings. It is not so arched but is melon-shaped while as the corner

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ones are arcaded with shallow arched panels. This interesting treatment of the domes indicate a strong Persian-Central Asian influence.[9]

In the history of the world architecture, the domes have played an important part. It along with *mehrab* has attained an appearance of refined dignity in the history of Islamic architecture.[10] In Vedic times, huts of circular walls of bamboos had a domical roof. In Buddhist religion, a solid structural dome (*anda*) commonly known as stupa was originally a funeral mound or tumulus to enshrine the body relics of Buddha or Buddhist saints or to commemorate some event of religious significance. In case of earlier stupas, the shape was invariably hemispherical with a low base, but later on, these assumed an increasingly cylindrical form with a well-developed drum. Subsequently these tended to be more ornate when the base terraces and the umbrellas were multiplied. The Piprawa stupa in Basti district of U.P. of pre-Ashokan date and the original stupa built by Ashoka at Sanchi (c. 250 B.C.) are the earlier monuments symbolising this style. In course of time this style was absorbed by Muslims in building of their religious monuments so as to exercise their superiority over others. The dome of the Rock of Jerusalem built by Abdal Malik in 691 is a powerful example of this peculiar decorative element.[11]

The real magnificent manifestation of superb architectural projection was the introduction of a double dome by Amir Timur (Timur-i-Lung 1336-1405) in Central Asia. So far the domes met were of simple structures and there was no example of bulbous double dome. This new type, no doubt, consisted of the former type of dome but was covered now by a bulbous shell which superimposed it leaving a large space in between. This style appeared towards the end of Timur's reign since his early buildings are devoid of this feature. For the first time it is met in the mausoleum of his wife Bibi Khanum (started in 1399 and finished in 1403) erected by him after his visit to Damascus on June 8, 1401. He stayed there for two months, ransacked the city, burnt it and observed the sparks falling on the great Umayyad mosque built by Khalif-Walid in 705-13. It also got burnt and in the process, Timur saw the striking feature of the double dome and appreciated the architecture of this great building. He got it reproduced at his capital Samarkand first in the mausoleum of his wife Bibi Khanum and afterwards it was repeated in his own mausoleum known as Gur Amir. After Timur's death in 1405, the double dome passed from Samarkand to Khurasan and was spread by Timurids at Herat. He did not see any other Muslim buildings with a double dome in India when he invaded it in 1398. In India it was Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) who introduced it quite successfully in Kashmir at his mother's tomb for the first time. It is, therefore, evident here that the Sultan derived stimulus and reinforcement in maintaining close and significant cultural and commercial interchange from Timurids through many artisans, craftsmen and expert workmen who came over here and

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were honoured for their intellectual skill. The main initiative came from Jasrath Khan Khukhar or Ghakhar, the chief of the tribe settled in Western Punjab (Pakistan).[12] He was a well wisher and a friend of the Sultan. He was acquainted with the technique of building of these edifices and other crafts and arts since he had lived in Samarkand, Bukhara and even in Persia as a captive of Timur.[13]

This goes against the imaginary account of some scholars that Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin was imprisoned by Timur and had gained experience in various fields during his stay at Samarkand.[14] This credit, however, also goes to the remarkable genius of the indigenous craftsmen duly guided by fresh innovations by artisans from Persia and Central Asia who had atleast worked under Timur in making a notable contribution of a double dome at the mausoleums of Bibi Khanum and Gur Amir or after him in other buildings raised in Khurasan or at Herat. After Kashmir, this structural feature appeared in the tomb of Shihab-ud-din Taj Khan (1501) and then it was repeated a few years later, although still in embryo, in the tomb of Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) in 1518. The double dome became an accomplished fact in the mausoleum of the emperor Humayun who died in 1556. It took eight years for his devoted consort Haji Begum to erect it. Haji Begum's production at Delhi inspired Shahjahan (1627-1658) to raise a similar mausoleum at Agra for his beloved wife, Arjumand Begum, popularly known as Mumtaz Mahal. It became an outstanding landmark in the development of the Mughal style in India and afterwards it became customary to represent this tradition in the mausoleums of the Mughals. The type followed the same course during and after the reign of Aurangzeb (1627-1707). The best known example is the mausoleum of Safdar Jung (1739-53)—a nephew of the first king of Oudh who resided mainly at Delhi and is the last Muslim monument of the kind in the capital city of India.[15]

The source for the development of the double dome, the birth right of Timurid ancestory, was unquestionably provided by Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin who was in most respects superior to others around him and in building such structures he has to be regarded as the most dynamic personality of Asia. There is close resemblance of the dome style as provided by the Sultan at his mother's tomb with the dome of Bibi Khanum and Gur Amir. All the three monuments are built of bricks covered with glazed, moulded or enamelled bricks or tiles. In case of Badshah monument, these are of blue colour and are studded at intervals in the exterior walls of the monument. The use of enamelled or glazed tiles is said to be a Muslim contribution.[16] In acutal size and in material, Badshah monument may vary with those of Timur's monuments but still the bold and robust character of the structural composition of the former marks it the most ambitious architectural production of the Sultan. The height of the control or central dome is approximately 15′-4″, of the outer shell in the extradoz is 7′-8″ raising the total height to 23′. The total height of the structure

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is about 54′-3″. The provision of a square window on south-east side of this dome was a sure indication that it was a double domed structure when its architectural niceties were initially reported. Wooden beams were provided in the subsidiary domes for easy access through the central dome as is observed in the main chamber down below against which an iron chain is still hanging. It was meant for holding a suitable lamp for which a socket in a wooden beam is still visible. The presence of the chain attached to the apex of the central dome has, therefore, been wrongly conceived that it was originally a *Panchamukha* (five-faced or five-headed) temple with a chain attached to a bell.[17] However, the design and execution of this tomb, no doubt, implies Persian influence[18] but at the same time it is a vivid example of the fusion of the two styles in the valley which are easily discernible. It has thus produced a new school of architecture, called Indo-Islamic architecture.

An isolated and octagonal-based domed structure with four squinches and four windows is located at a place called Dhumat in Hawal area of Srinagar on the right side of Srinagar-Ganderbal road.

Immediately to the west of Hariparbat and to the south-west of Jama Masjid in the midst of a thickly populated area of the city is the tomb of a Muslim saint Pir Haji Muhammad Sahib. It is also constructed in much the same manner as the mausoleum of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin's mother. Its plinth, corner superstructures, ancient carved stones, enclosure wall and the ornamented gateway of the courtyard undoubtedly mark it to be a Hindu shrine identified at Vishnu *Ranasvamin*.[19]

Among the other buildings built during the supremacy of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, the mosque and tomb of Madin Sahib, a saint-cum-Ambassador from Central Asia are of extraordinary value and interest. Situated in the suburb of Zadibal and just beyond the bridge called Buta Kadal, both the structures are built on the site of an old Hindu temple. The stone plinth of the mosque, fluted stone columns used in the porch of the mosque or in the inner chamber of the tomb still indicate that these belonged to a temple, the ruins of which still exist near the converted shrines. Apart from the stone columns of the temple, the base of the mosque is identical with that of the temple and it is evident that its plinth, as in the case of foregoing structures, has not been disturbed. Only the superstructure of brick walls was raised over it so as to convert it into a mosque. In recent probings, a fragmentary image of Nandi was encountered near the shrine which apparently suggests that the temple belonged to Shiva.[20] All the four walls of the superstructure and that of the upper space of the doorway have been adorned externally with trefoiled brick niches. Their pilasters along with those of the walls standing upon the bases are surmounted by capitals which provide substantial evidence of temple architectural proclivity. A beautiful tracery work adorn the spandrels of the arches of the niches whose entabulature is again of a pre-Muhammadan style. A considerable wooden

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architecture of great prominence is displayed by eaves containing ornamented rows of wooden tongues projecting downwards. These eaves in turn surmount the double series of dentils and metopes bearing carvings of exquisite fineness and finish which embellish the cornice of the walls composed of various courses of wood. The structure is covered by sloping roofs in tiers, each surface water-proofed with layers of birch bark. It was overgrown with white and blue showy flowers which added to the lustre of the shrine. As in the case of Jama Masjid or as a matter of fact in other *ziarats* in Kashmir, such typical features of the roofs which both architecturally and structurally were of infinite value are the records of the past. These are renovated now in a fresh position according to the most recent condition. The roof of the mosque of Madin Sahib has been laid out with wooden planks spread over with waterproof sheets. These were covered then with well lavigated earth. It was done to retain its originality. The finial of the roof was represented by a long upright pole at the time of the renovation in the years 1982-84. The doorway leading to the mosque on the east is elaborately carved. Internally the prayer chamber is plain except the ceiling laid out by carved wood pieces of very thin and small sizes designed with different geometrical patterns—a system specially named as *khatam-band* ceiling in the valley, the tradition whereof is still being continued in the valley by indigenous artisans. The ceiling of the mosque is supported by multi-faceted wooden columns, four in number. The mosque of Madin Sahib as such is the earliest genuine example of wooden style in Kashmir built in 1444 according to the inscription over its doorway.[21]

Contemporary with the mosque and to its north is the saint's tomb whose architectural grandeur has been enriched by surface decoration on its facade and the entrance porch with the application of brilliantly coloured tiles which again is Persian or Central Asian extraction. These were of various hues of which yellow, orange, green, blue, red and brown colours surface predominantly. The motifs represented are the graceful scrolls glowing with floral patterns, sometimes interwoven with heads of animals, human representations and other natural scenes. The much reported scene of the left spandrel of the entrance in the east facade is that of a beast with the body of a leopard changing at the neck into the trunk of a human being, shooting with a bow and arrow at its own tail which ends in a kind of dragon's head. A fox shown down below is curiously looking on among flowers and cloud-forms. The principal beast is about four feet long and presents quite an heraldic attitude. The composition of all these representations presents a scheme of variegated colours. The background is in blue colour, the trunk of the man is red, the body of the leopard is yellow with light green spots, the dragon's head and the fox are reddish brown and the flowers are of various colours.[22] It was maintained that the 'cloud forms' are common in Chinese and Persian art. The dragon so identified

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was subsequently recognized to be plainly a centaur with drawn bow, the yellow being dappled in green.[23] The composition of the motif has recently been recognized by an expert to be a zodiac sign—a form of sagittarius planet[24] but the presence of a fox and the environmental phenomena associated with the same do not stand accounted for. During the course of clearance work in the outer chamber of the tomb, some more tiles were obtained which were stamped with the heads of the human beings. The facial characteristics and the style of the turbans on the heads bear close resemblance with the people of Persia and Central Asia. The tile work in the spandrels being the source of main attraction at the monument has, in its style, design and execution an appearance of being of Persian manufacture.[25]

During 14th and 15th centuries, this type of impressive decoration immensely developed and was commonly used in Egypt, Syria, Khurasan, Central Asia and India. Timur used these in his tomb, Gur Amir (1405) at Samarkand which was originally built for his grandson. Like the tomb of Madin Sahib here also the gateway is decorated with the tile work in varied colours. The right application of the glazed tiles stamped with different motifs of landscapes representing flowers, shrubs, rivulets, trees, birds, animals, human faces and 'cloud forms' etc indicates a matured expertise. It again points out that such an impulse came from outside especially from Central Asia with which the valley had effective cultural and commercial contacts during the period under report. In fact it is only the tile work which has raised the tomb of saintly personage to a place of wonder among the Islamic buildings in the valley. Two epitaphs furnish the name of the 15th century saint here as Muhammad-al-Madin, a resident of Kashmir and his son Yahhya.[26] Syed Muhammad Madin had visited the valley first in the reign of Sultan Sikandar (1389-1413) but went back to the court of Timur to complete his duties as an Ambassador and came back during the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70). He settled here relinquishing all worldly attachment and dedicated himself completely to spiritual way of life. He died in the reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin and as a fitting memorial this structure with multi-splendid grandeur and beauty was constructed in his honour.

The tile work is one of the most valuable antiquities of Kashmir but at the same time it has been presumed that these have been reset at some unknown period.[27] No doubt such architectural composition dominated during Mughal rule but undoubtedly the present tile work was employed on the saint's tomb simultaneously with its construction. Tomb structures were introduced into India by Muhammadans at an early stage and eventually it produced some of the most superb examples.[28] The tile work was one of the most important methods of embellishing these holy shrines. The tiles bore various motifs representing stylised human beings, symmetrical and confronted animals like sphinx, centaur, graffin, a monster with the body of a

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woman and wings and claws of a bird besides such other hybrid motifs. Such artistic productions of popular motifs were employed in the funeral structures only to fill up the minds of visitors with the institution of divine spirit while visiting the resting place of the departed soul. Iran and Central Asia concentrated more on such representations than most other regions.[29] It was, therefore, an offshoot of the architectural culture in the valley since Sultan had very friendly relations with these regions.

The Sultan is also reputed for building a palace over an artificial island now known as Zaina-lank, in the midst of Wular lake (anc. Mahapadmasaras).[30] In fact there already existed an island or the temple in the midst of the lake where the water was deep after filling it up with stones.[31] With the silting process, it is now situated close to the present mouth of river Jhelum. The palace built here, obviously from an environmental point of view must have been remarkable example of the most romantic and picturesque order. It looked as a unique palace in the world.[32] The king organised regular jovial parties here for amusements and recreation. The island was built in 1443-44.[33]

In the recent years, preliminary probing revealed the existence of a temple base along with the remains of a mosque. This is quite in contravention of the literary records. Existence of a temple has not been mentioned by Jonaraja or his successors though later Persian authors have mentioned the exposure of two bronze images from here. The author of *Baharistan-i-Shahi* (1614) writes that there was previously a big idol house and a lofty temple. Unaware of these being submerged in the water, the Sultan ordered to build the island at a spot where the water level was at low depth. In winter, when the water level receded to its lowest level, the stones of temple could become visible. The divers on his orders went into the temple and brought out the two bronze images. He then selected this very site for developing an island. A master architect Duroodgiri, was called from Gujarat and he supervised the construction of the boat which the king himself used for his pleasure trips if and when he desired.

The author further records that the boat stood exactly over the site of the submerged temple. The area was then filled with stones sunk into the lake. Then boat loads of loose earth and then again of stones were dropped till the island came up. It was raised above the water level of the lake so as to save it from floods and storms. He built a palace with its ground floor made of stones and the upper two storeys of brick and timber. A mosque in the middle of the lake was also raised.[34] This is the first of its instance when the temple plinth has not been utilised for the construction of the mosque. The relationship of both the shrines in terms of their design, date of construction, material used in their foundations, could further be ascertained through the aid of marine archaeology which could also help in tracing

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out the limits of the present island. It will also help in location, if any, of the original island and the temple not referred to in the literary accounts.[35]

Smaller in dimensions than that of the foregoing, are two more artificial islands now commonly known as Suna (golden) lank and Rupa (silver) lank which the Sultan built in two distinct portions of Dal lake. Both of them were made suitable for agricultural produce, the tradition whereof is still being maintained. Long strips of the lake shore are being demarcated for such purposes even now. In order to give shelter to the boatmen in distress, the Sultan also built a three storeyed house over the former island and on the latter one, being smaller than it. Sultan Hassan Shah (1472-84) during his reign embellished it with chinars on the four corners and the spot is even now known as 'Char Chinari'.[36]

As the period was passing through the atmosphere of toleration and peace, there was judicious concentration of building activity in wood and brick all over the valley. The personal patronage and the scholarly encouragement of the king gave a great stimulation to the construction of many more secular buildings, town sites, gardens and other public welfare schemes which were mainly associated with his name. The most resplendant town site was his capital at Nowshahr—the area which lies immediately to the west of Hariparbat between Sangin Darwaza and Soura. It was known as Jainanagri[37] and also as Zaina-Dab or Rajdan[38] (the seat of the government). It was built on the canal also named after him as *Jainaganga* which flowed towards Jama Masjid. The palace built here was of twelve storeys. Each storey was provided with halls which were spacious and wide. Some of the walls were fitted with glass panes. There was an audience hall adorned with a cornered throne. The entire complex was covered with a golden dome which gave an appearance of a heavenly lotus.[39] The capital city was the centre of attraction to men of distinction, culture and learning. Here a university was established for the maintenance of which some villages like Soibugh (Badgam district) and Khuyahom (Handwara tehsil) were assigned.[40] The garden attached to his palace was known as Baghi Jainagiri. The other gardens were Baghi Jainapur or Baghi Jainakut which were mostly attached to the town sites where lofty buildings mostly of five storeys were built and each storey contained apartment, halls, galleries and corridors. These houses survived for a considerably long period and had existed in their original shape till the middle of the 16th century.[41] The first permanent bridge over the river Jhelum was also named after him as Zaina Kadal.[42] Built of wood and stone, the bridge was constructed on cantilever principle in which the projecting beams or piers supporting the structure take the form of a massive wooden formation. This system of bridges was adopted by the king's successors for many hundreds of years till the number of bridges spanning the river had reached to seven. Probably the last bridge in the series was Safakadal (7th bridge) built by Saif Khan, the Governor of

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Kashmir in 1670. Most of these bridges necessitated considerable restoration so that in most cases these appear modern.

All these superb, refined and finished structural achivements of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin during his half a century rule stand as an eloquent proof of his power and magnificence in comparison to his predecessors in whose time such a form of wooden buildings got inspiration. It certainly attained its richest and varied form during Sultans' time and such a forceful manifestation continued to be adopted even by his successors both in the construction of mosques and tombs or *ziarats* enshrining the remains of some local saint or distinguished person of the area. Both of these structures are composed of much the same architectural elements and stand dotted almost all over the valley be it a big town or a small village.[43] The most notable and fine examples where such an architectural activity could be observed are:

1) Shrine of Shaikh Nur-ud-din, founder of Rishi order in the valley at Chari Sharif, (Badgam district).
2) Jama Masjid at Pampor (Pulwama district).
3) Tomb of Shokh Baba at Pampor (Pulwama district).
4) Mosque of Amir Muhammad Hamdani, Pampur (Pulwama district).
5) Ziarat of Baba Bamdin Sahib, Bumazuv (Anantnag district).
6) Jama Masjid at Shopian (Pulwama district).
7) Ziarat of Baba Zain-ud-din—one of the four disciples of Shaikh Nur-ud-din Sahib, Aishmuqam (Anantnag district).
8) Ziarat of Baba Rishi, Tangmarg (Baramulla district) etc.

Likewise, Srinagar district has also excelled in the construction of most sumptuous forms of wooden buildings some of which are of exceptional character like:

1) Ziarat of Dastigir Sahib, near Khanyar/Chowk, Srinagar.
2) Ziarat of Shaikh Makhdum Hamza, Hariparbat, Srinagar.
3) Ziarat of Shah Sahib, Safakadal, Srinagar.
4) Ziarat of Malik Sahib, Malikangan, Srinagar.
5) Tomb of Tang Baba Sahib, Seh Yar, Srinagar.
6) Ziarat of Batmaloo Sahib, Batmaloo, Srinagar.
7) Tomb and mosque of Naqashbandi Sahib, Nowhatta, Srinagar and so on.

In the majority of these buildings, there were combinations of a mosque with its accompanying mortuary chapel and the mosque.

The architectural records of the Sultanate period during14th and 15th centuries received a high degree of expression in the construction of both the religious and secular buildings. This was largely the outcome of the flood of religious fervour

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and also because of the changed political atmosphere. Raised generally on a lofty basement of stones, the superstructure was entirely of wood with empty spaces filled up with bricks. The roofs were rising in tiers with sloping gables projecting from the sides. Window openings and balustrades were commonly filled with *Jalis*, occupying an important position in ornamental scheme. A remarkable feature in the interior of the structures was *khatumband* ceiling of various shades. These are the small slips of pine wood delicately bound together so as to form a fascinating geometrical pattern. During this period it received a great impetus. Ceilings of the same construction and design are found in Samarkand, Bukhara, Iran, Istambul, Algiers and Morocco.[44] The general principles governing the design, layout and the use of material continued till the art of stone building was revived by the Mughals in the 16th and 17th centuries.

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10

History and Archaeology

Mughal Period (1586-1753 A.D.)

Mughal emperors were always keen to annex the valley of Kashmir as they were fascinated with its cool climate, running streams and natural beauty. Babar seriously devoted his attention towards it but his small expedition was unsuccessful. It was his first cousin, Mirza Haidar Dughlat who ruled over the country for ten years (1540-50) on behalf of Humayun. After his death in 1550, Chaks took over the reign of the government and as early as 1559, Ghazi Khan Shah, the *de facto* ruler of Kashmir (1555-62) wanted to have friendly relations with Akbar but could not succeed. He had to face the troops sent by the Mughals under Mirza Qara Bahadur which were seriously defeated near Rajouri by the troops of the valley. This defeat compelled Akbar to postpone the conquest of Kashmir for a more opportune moment but at the same time he did not fail to maintain regular contact with the events that were taking place here. Taking advantage of the confusion prevailing in the valley, emperor Akbar sent his representative, Qasim Khan Mir Bahr who entered the valley on June 28, 1586. He was successful in entering the capital of the valley by creating further confusion among Kashmiris and in October of the same year proclaimed Akbar as the sovereign of Kashmir.[1] Still it was not till June 5, 1589 when Akbar himself entered Srinagar, and personally visited most of the places and took administrative measures like abolition of taxes or assessment of land revenue etc and thus the valley became part and parcel of the vast empire of Mughals. Even with the introduction of important innovations in administrative and religious affairs, the Chaks did not reconcile themselves to the Mughal rule and caused an abortive rising. During his second visit in October 1592, he again treated the rebels generously. He reduced the taxes further and entered into matrimonial alliances with the Chaks, but still they remained resentful and rebellious.[2] It was only on his third visit in 1597 that he was successful in crushing the rebels and thus completed the magnificent circumference of Mughal empire in north India and Afghanistan also.[3]

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Frankly speaking Kashmiris would not have easily yielded and accepted his suzerainty but for the grievous famine which took place when the emperor was in the valley. Many mothers were rendered destitute and having no means of nourishment for their children, they exposed them for sale in the public.[4] Streets and roads were blocked by dead bodies. Many houses and cities were depopulated.[5]

Akbar the Great—one of the mightiest kings known to history died in October 1605 and his son Jahangir ascended the throne on October 24, 1605. He developed a unique love for Kashmir and visited it eight times. The Chaks were anxious to recover their lost power but were terribly crushed. Kishtwar—known as miniature Kashmir by way of climate and agricultural produce was occupied in March 1620. Jahangir's death in October 1627 was followed by a conflict for succession. However, after a brief gap, his son Shahjahan ascended the throne on February 6, 1628. Shahjahan was much more successful than his predecessors in crushing the lawlessness. He selected men of proven ability, efficiency and calibre to the post of provincial governors. All the oppressive taxes levied on the subjects in the valley were abolished and a *farman* issued by him was inscribed on a stone fixed on the northern gate of famous Jama Masjid. Two regions of Baltistan and Ladakh were conquered. He restored peace but in the year 1635, there was a conflict among the Shias and Sunnis. Again in 1641, the valley witnessed a great famine but Shahjahan took timely action for distribution of free food for which he opened centres in different parts of the valley, besides the financial relief. His reign, in short, was acclaimed as the golden age of Mughals when the empire reached its height of glory and prosperity. In September 1657, Shahjahan fell ill and chose his eldest son among his four sons as the next sovereign since he alone held liberal religious views. This gave a cause to other princes to prepare themselves for war. They only followed the past tradition of the royal family. Mostly all the previous Mughal emperors had to fight in order to secure their succession to the throne. Mughal royal family always held that 'kingship knows no kinship'. In the war of succession that ensued, it was only Aurangzeb who succeeded to throne in 1658. His coronation took place on June 5, 1659 amidst great pomp and show while his father, Shahjahan was under confinement. The sad end of his three sons had given him a rude shock and during his captivity, only his daughter, Jahanara shared with her father all sorrows and miseries. She served him with all the tenderness and thus combined in her the tenderness of mother and a daughter.[6] Unlike his father or predecessors, Aurangzeb was a puritan of high order. His religious intolerance and blindness to practical realities sapped the foundations of the empire built by the genius of Akbar. During his reign in the valley, thousands of Kashmiri pandits were forced to embrace Islam. Some of the leaders related the story of Mughal tyranny to Guru Tegh Bahadur, who in order to save them, sacrificed his life.[7] His execution

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in 1675 at the hands of Aurangzeb spread a wave of indignation and compelled them to take up arms against the emperor. This also contributed to the downfall of Mughal empire. Because of the lack of political foresight, the disintegration of the empire became visible even before his death in 1707.

In the letters written by Aurangzeb to his three surviving sons before his death, he had admitted that he had passed his years without any profit and that he was carrying with him nothing but the burden of sins. This shows that he died in harness as a broken-hearted person and visualised that the events leading to the war of succession between him and his brothers would be repeated by his sons after his death also. His fears came true after his death. Corruption, inefficiency, chaos and upheavals were the order of the day. Seven rulers after him occupied the throne one after the other. It had its own repercussions on the socio-political set-up in the valley. The valley was ruled by the representatives designated as governors who were assisted by deputy governors. They were changed immediately after the change of rulers at Delhi. There were internal and external revolts and chaos was perceptible everywhere. Some of the Kashmiri nobles approached Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul and invited him to annex Kashmir. He despatched a large force which was opposed by Mughals at Shupian in 1753. The Mughals were defeated and Kashmir passed into the hands of Afghans.

The Mughals, no doubt, till the accession of Aurangzeb gave peace and promoted trade, industry and agriculture but Kashmir lost its separate identity. The Kashmiri ruling families of Chaks, Magres and Rainas were replaced by a hierarchy of Mughal officers who were directly responsible for the administration of the country. Because of lack of local patronage, poets, scholars and painters left the valley and sought employment at the Mughal court. When the conditions settled, scholars like Talib Kamil, Mulla Shah Badakshi came to Kashmir where they completed their works as the land with its pleasant and refreshing climate was a charming place of retreat.[8] So also the Mughal emperors unlike their Muslim predecessors evinced keen interest in the art of painting which was a combination of both native and foreign elements. The favourite subjects were plants, flowers, animals, birds and other natural objects. There was decline and deterioration in the art of painting during the reign of Aurangzeb. However, one of the most distinguishing features of Mughal rule was a unique development in the art of building and garden planning.

Architectural Records of the Mughals

The Mughal architecture in Kashmir represents a mixture of a mixed art of Hindus and Muslims. Even before their occupation of the valley, Muslim architecture was mainly influenced by the Hindu architecture during Sultanate Period.

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The great monuments and specimens of Mughal art even now bespeak of the glory and grandeur of the Mughal times. The style of their buildings in the valley is the same as is found at Agra, Delhi and Lahore. The only difference is that a local grey limestone was generally used for face work.[9] They were able to erect the edifices of their choice in the valley since there was complete absence of gangsterism which prevailed prior to the advent of Akbar. Such peaceful conditions continued during the reign of his two successors as well. They used to visit the valley for a short period in a year primarily to get relief from the burning heat of the plains. In the process, they used to get themselves acquainted with socio-economic conditions of the people and thus could maintain their hold over the valley quite firmly. No Mughal emperor visited the valley after the death of Aurangzeb and subsequent decline of the Mughal power in India affected the political conditions of the valley which obviously brought about the end of architectural ambitions of later Mughal rulers.

All the three emperors, Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan retained fundamental principles of imperial movement of architectural scheme. Whatever they built, nothing was omitted in their composition. They built rest houses, sarais and ramparts with elegant and imposing gateways, royal and private compartments, barracks, servant quarters, battlemented fortifications with massive bastions and guard rooms and above all well planned gardens with water channels, water chutes, tanks, fountains etc. Kashmir lost something by way of its separate identity but on the other hand it gained much more.[10]

The earliest Mughal remains are the citadel on the hill of Hariparbat and the retaining wall around it with gateways. Both were built by Akbar on his third visit to the valley.[11] The original Akbari citadel at the summit of the hill is a more recent replacement but the retaining walls with two gates, the Kathi Darwaza and Sangin Darwaza are the standing and dignified specimens of the Mughal period.[12] On earlier occasions again the construction of the fort on the hill of Kohi-Maran (Hariparbat) was attributed to Akbar.[13] There is practically nothing left of the original fortress erected on the hill by Akbar.[14]

Leaving aside all these arguments put forth by the experts, the construction of the entire fortress on the hill was attributed to Afghans. Contemporary literary reference did mention that Akbar ordered that the fort should be made of stone instead of an earthen wall, the foundation of which was laid some years earlier.[15] Akbar and his two successors always adopted themselves to the climate and selected their sites for laying out gardens or construction of buildings befitting the environment of the area concerned.[16] As such, Akbar could never have overlooked the importance of the hillock firstly in respect of the security of the royal establishment and secondly, from the strategic point of view. Situated more or less in the

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midst of the valley, this isolated hill is endowed with a very attractive natural scenery. It overlooks the city down below and the glittering waters of the Dal lake to its east. The hill was already a centre of communal harmony. The Hindus visited it for worshipping of Shri Chakra—a mystic symbol along with other goddesses and Muslims came to pay their homage to the ziarat of a popular saint—Makhdum Shaikh Hamza on the southern slope of the hill.[17] Akbar's broad views and far-sighted statesmanship, therefore, would never have allowed him to ignore here the erection of a citadel or a building of secular architecture so dear to him. A close scrutiny of the architectural niceties have revealed that some of the structural components of the fort are essentially similar to other edifices in India especially the fort at Ajmer built by him in 1570. It too was mainly designed for Akbar's accommodation when on tour.[18] The foundation of unhewn rubbles, the interior composition of cells at the ground floor, watch towers, the battlemented rampart on the interior side and the open courtyard are some of the earlier elements of Mughal architecture which still contain the former glory. Even the gallery and the chambers leading to the upper storey of cells facing the common courtyard in the centre and traces of vaulted roofs with stone ribs are also some of the salient features of the pre-Afghan buildings.

The citadel follows the irregular plan of the summit of the hill. The hasty construction must have been conceived by the emperor firstly to commemorate the conquest of the valley and secondly, to check the frequent uprising of Chaks and other feudal lords or disgruntled nobles. Its expansion or development had to be abandoned after the emperor proposed the building of the new capital of Nagar-Nagar around the periphery of the hill and to enclose it with a fortification wall. A number of additions were made to the original citadel at the summit in later days which included a long flight of steps leading to the interior of the fort through two panelled wooden doors studded with pointed iron spikes, loopholed outer fortification boundary wall with bigger bastions at intervals and such other enlarged and altered items. It is, therefore, unlikely that both the structures on the summit of the hill and around this new capital city were built simultaneously.[19] A deep tank in the outer premises of the fort serves as a water reservoir and its probing is likely to indicate the various phases of fort construction.

Closely connected with Akbar's township, this land fort was made impregnable from outside attacks. Constructed by the emperor in 1597-98 at a cost of one crore ten lakh rupees by 200 Indian master masons, the rampart presents a formidable appearance. The work was carried under the supervision of Khwaja Muhammad Husain.[20] What necessitated him to go in for such a massive fortification wall when he had already initiated one such structure at the summit of the hill is not known. It is quite likely that he wanted to provide work for the people who had faced a grave

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situation because of devastating famine in the same year. The other purpose of building the rampart was to house the soldiers who had started to tease the people at large and molest their women folk. By providing accommodation within the fort premises, he maintained strict privacy of the people. Being a man of exceptional brilliance, some say, he built this fort to suppress the war-like Kashmiris and thus break their independent spirit. He inaugurated the city when the construction of the fort was on.[21] In the same year, he also had a trip in a pleasure boat in river Jhelum and also participated in the birthday celebration when both banks of the river were illuminated with the litting of thousands of tiny clay lamps. This reflects his versatile genius and did not feel tired in conducting many activities at the same time.

The rampart covers an area of 5 kms in circumference and being extensive in area and massive in size, it is pierced through a number of gates and intermidiary entrances. Out of these the prominent gates were Kathi Darwaza and Sangin Darwaza on the south-east and western sides. The former was meant for entry of the nobles and distinguished persons and the latter for use of the royal entourage. The other gates like Bachhi Darwaza etc were utilised by the general public and the soldiers. The bastions provided at irregular intervals intercepted the fortification wall with crenellations. The turning points and the curved sections of the walls have been strengthened by these bastions. These were to neutralize the building of the wall and besides giving support to it, these served as guard or watch towers. These massive structures served as residential-cum-duty rooms for the guards on duty. The stairs leading to the next storey also give access to the top terrace of the fortification wall which also stood provided with battlements along with walk-wall running over its inner facade. The platform, pavilions and lattice windows in the bastions and the fortification wall were meant for round the clock watch of the guards in groups. The sides and the parapet wall carry three and even more tiers of loopholes in different sizes but mostly in vertical positions for mounting of cannons, heavy or light according to their sizes. Built of heavy blocks of stones at the base and of smaller sizes at the top using coursed rubble stone masonry in lime, *surkhi* and *zeera* (pounded brick bits), its structural stability was strongly maintained. It is because of this that some parts of the fort wall have remained intact through the centuries. However, the finely proportioned and still dignified proof of early Mughal architectural treatment of this structure are the two gateways, the Kathi Darwaza and the Sangin Darwaza. Both are the outstanding works of art commonly found in the wide range of such structural projects erected by the emperor outside the valley. The commendable achievements of these structures indicate the experience of the group of workmen brought from India only to speed up their production on a common pattern.

The Kathi Darwaza has an arched gateway with small raised up platforms on

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both sides for the alert watchmen. It is connected with the battlemented wall on east and west with large bastions on either sides. Its facade laid out delicately with carved stone slabs is decorated with rectangular arched panels, two projected lotus medallions and Persian inscriptions purporting the foundation of the fort of Nagar-Nagar, its cost and other details. The inside passage of the gateway is flanked by widely carved panels with a vaulted ceiling resting in turn on the back walls of the recesses. The other side of the archway facing the hill and the emperor's city is simple but two staircases have been laid out on either sides which lead to the domed chamber above. The side wall of the chamber and the kiosk has since given way but there are indications of side openings which connected the fortification wall and the bastions. The dome of the entrance was opened about a couple of years back for purposes of repairs and it was found to be gigantic in proportion. It was completed at the initial stage with radiating courses of bricks. The roof of the bastions must have been of the similar pattern.

The Sangin Darwaza in the middle of the fortification wall on the west is more or less built on the same pattern as that of Kathi Darwaza. As it was intended for private entry only, it is larger, more richly ornated and elegant in design. The staircases on its both sides are through an arched small chambers. These give access to the upper storey, the oriel windows, the roof and to the inner top facade of the fortification wall through the arched openings. The two projected windows with their delicate pillars and kiosks give a graceful look to the entire composition. The next additions are the two separate guard rooms flanking both sides of the gateway which were provided for petrolling of guards and for keeping arms and ammunitions.

Towards the extreme east and overlooking the Dal lake, he built his residential quarters and laid out in its front a terraced garden called Darshini Garden or the Garden of Audience provided with water tanks and cataracts.[22] Being nearer to Dal lake, there must have been an unfailing supply of water. Again being encouraged with such an environmental setting, he laid out another beautiful terraced garden on bank of Dal lake known as Nasim Bagh or the 'Garden of Breeze' near the famous Hazaratbal shrine. It was provided with pathways, tanks, cascades and other water devices. When in its original form, it must have been a novel composition. Over a thousand Chinar trees were planted in it by Shahjahan, the grandson of Akbar.[23]

Akbar thus inspired the architectural movement in the valley which was assiduously continued by his successors as well. The style of architecture received expansion and reached a high stage of development as is apparent in the subsequent art of the Mughals. The architectural productions, though in ruins now, are still the silent record of the elegance and richness of the standard successfully achieved by the Mughals. These are the ornamented terraced gardens created solely as pleasure

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resorts against an enchanting scenery enclosed by high boundary walls and a monumental entrance gateway. *Sarais* enroute to the valley from the plains which were provided with all the avenues like sumptuous rest-houses, water, mosques, cells for guards, royal chambers and audience halls were built. The entire complex used to be enclosed with high fortification wall duly provided with imposing gateways and boldly projected bastions at intervals. These *sarais* were primarily meant to give comfortable refuge to the royal family and their cavalcade on their annual visits to the valley when they used to come here to escape from the scorching heat and binding duststorms of the plains. These *sarais*-cum-forts are the impressive memorials of the Mughal power. On this side of Pir Panjal pass, such structures were built at Aliabad, Khanpur, Hirpur and Shadipur.[24]

Both Shahjahan and Jahangir, his son and grandson loved to visit Kashmir but lacked the genius of Akbar. They used to clothe in more costly material the creative forms of their predecessor.[25]

Akbar himself was not destined to complete the construction of the fort which was finally completed during the reign of Jahangir.[26]

Jahangir was a connoisseur of the art of painting. He enthusiastically patronized the school of miniature paintings which reached its zenith during his reign. Instead of erection of architectural buildings, he, however, took keen interest in laying out gardens and other such pleasances. One such spacious garden laid out in the valley is the famous Shalimar Bagh which was provided with elaborate and comprehensive compositions.

Shalimar is the derivative of the combined word of *Shala* and *Mar*. In Sanskrit *Shala* means the house and *Mar* is the title given to the god of love, i.e. Kamadeva.[27] Hence the house of the god of love. Legendary account mentions that in olden days there was a villa where the founder of the city of Srinagar, king Pravarasena II used to take rest whenever he used to visit a hermit named Sograma or Sukarma[28] who was living somewhere near the present village of Harwan. It stands ascertained that the genesis of the word 'Shalamar' is not a coinage of Jahangir.

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On the basis of phonetic changes the modern derivative in Kashmiri language

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Jayaratha (1128-55) the commentator of the *Tantraloka* in its last chapter relates that his family for several generations in the past had been devout worshippers of Shiva and were very much religious minded. One of them named Utpalaratha among others built a matha—a monastery at a place called 'Shala'. This site of Shala could have been situated just near the place enjoying a hoary antiquity as a sacred place and for its maintenance the revenue of the village Shalabug (Shala-bhogya) in its vicinity was assigned. The commentator, Jayaratha and his ancestors lived here and as such its association with the monastery of 'Shala' cannot be denied. It is to be remembered in this connection that villages for such endowments were called *Buga* (Bhogyas) as in the case of Soibuga (Someshvara bhogya) in Badgam district and so on. The place of *Shala* was so called because there was or were several religious structures built or standing at the site. The streamlet *Mar* otherwise called Mahasarit as mentioned above was made to flow through the site for the use of the pilgrims and people living there. It may have had its use in the waterfall as well which is referred to by the author of *Ain-i-Akbari*. It is, therefore, evident that there existed already an important sacred site called 'Shala' and the streamlet 'Mahasarit' or 'Mar' was passing through it, hence named as 'Shalamar' even before the garden was laid out by Jahangir.

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as to provide continuous flow of water throughout the area.

Enclosed within a high wall, the Shalimar garden on account of its size, background and structural perfection holds a high place among the Mughal gardens. Bewitched by its beauty and elegance, Shahjahan built a garden in 1637 at Lahore and named it also as Shalimar garden.[33] It must have been a replica of Jahangir's Shalimar garden at Srinagar.

The four-terraced garden is divided into three parts. A long canal about 3 kms long joined it with Dal lake. The other canal the floor and the sides of which were lined with polished limestones passed through the garden. Its water came from the mountain that tower behind the garden itself. All the three parts of the garden stood partitioned. The lowest one, the length of which has now been curtailed by laying out the Srinagar-Harwan link road was the hall of audience. The open, small and black marble throne still stands intact in the centre over the water-fall overlooking the fountains down below and the tank which now stands outside the recently erected enclosure wall on the front. The next part above it is slightly wider and consists of two shallow terraces. Here also in the middle of the canal stands a basement and a graceful platform surrounded by fountains. The basement of carved stones represents the bottom of the superstructure which once stood here. This was the hall of Private Audience. Being the seat of the royal couple (emperor Jahangir and the empress Nur Jahan), this must have been lavishly ornated. The private compartments for their stay were built on either sides of the terrace. These were provided with screen windows, pillared frontages, balustrades, doomed roofs and graceful kiosks. The luxurious *hamams* or bathing establishment were confined on the north-west of the entrance hall of this terrace. The garden was both the royal residence and also the place where emperor sat in state, the walls and other parts of the buildings must have been decorated with the miniature paintings, the scanty traces of which are still visible on the ruined walls of the domed structures meant for the stay of the royal couple. The emperor had named the garden as 'Farah Baksh' meaning delightful.

In 1632, Zafar Khan, a Mughal Governor of Shahjahan made extension to the garden and named it 'Faiz Bakhsh' meaning beautiful. This part being the uppermost one forms now the fourth terrace. To ensure privacy, the boundary wall on its front was provided with guard rooms on both the ends. Here in the centre of the canal, a magnificent pavilion of polished black marble was raised upon a platform which in itself stood in the centre of a square reservoir containing in its circumference 140 fountains. The pavilion was supported on each side by a range of six pillars which too instead of stones were of beautiful black marble.[34] The replacement of stone buildings by marble pavilions was carried out intermittently in India during the reign of Shahjahan.[35] The pavilion here was the summer-house of the

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royal family. It had domed rooms, a larger one being in the centre and small compartments in the corners. The complex was encircled by an open gallery and a separate passage was provided for crossing over the canal from one end to the other. The interior of all the chambers were painted in gilt. The doors were of stone which now no longer exist. The domes have been replaced by single roofs.[36] Some of the sculptured brackets are still visible. Surrounded by the cascades on every side, an unparalled lustre was produced when lamps were lit in their carved arched little recesses at night behind the shining waterfall.[37] This was appreciably a finished architectural appearance of the Mughals.

Smaller in dimensions but on similar designs and with no vital changes in their structural formations, many more gardens were laid out in various parts of the valley keeping in view the natural charm and environmental beauty. Both the emperor Jahangir and his queen Nur Jahan patronized such schemes. One of the characteristic example is the Jor Bagh or Darogha Bagh built on the bank of Manasbal lake. Overlooking the transparant waters of the lake, this four-walled terraced garden was laid out by the empress Nur Jahan. The chambers with arched entrances, vaulted ceiling and domed roofs are still existing on the lake side. Some isolated portion of the walls also indicate the glory of the structure it once had. Again, she laid out beautiful garden on the bank of the river Jhelum at Noorbagh—a locality named after her own name, near Idgah in Srinagar. This was an extensive area and only the staircases with the side walls were found of this splendid garden. The Governor of Kashmir laid out a garden in his name called Baghi-Iradat Khan in the year 1620. A streamlet called 'Telbal Nala' supplied water to the garden. In the second terrace solitary specimen of a wall 3′ high from the present day exposed level of the garden could be found. The structures and the terrace formations stand destroyed by the waters of the stream which empties itself finally into Dal lake. Many other gardens built by emperor Jahangir, his empress Nur Jahan or even the next sovereign, Shahjahan stand in name only and there is nothing to mention any of their features. However, outside Srinagar proper, a beautiful garden was laid at a picturesque site of Verinag spring (ancient Nila-Naga). The garden carried as usual pillared pavilions and the royal bathrooms. The ruins of the latter are still visible towards the east and beyond the rubble wall over which there is a waterfall. The limits of the garden stand disturbed beyond this limit. A shallow channel laid out in the centre of the garden is watered from the spring which tosses in foam with an astonishing roar and is too deep to fathom. It was surrounded by a stone embankment. To its east, temples of stone also existed. The stones of the temples must have been used by Jahangir, at the time of construction of stone-enclosure or the cells around the spring.[38] It is considered to be the source of river Jhelum.

The buildings and the layout of the garden with flowers of brilliant colours in

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an enchanting environment at Verinag being a unique site of historical interest displays the most ambitious production of Jahangir's imagination.

An underground fine aqueduct takes the water of the spring enclosed by an octagonal tank into the garden and the royal *hamams* built on the eastern side of the structure. The stream or the canal is twelve feet wide and a thousand feet long and the water then turns into a waterfall which feeds the river Jhelum down below. At the point of its discharge from the spring, it is covered by an arched entrance which along with the arcaded recesses, twenty-four in number, were originally built in stone. On two sides of the octagon on the north, two large chambers each containing a staircase lead to the upper storey above. The upper chambers over the entrance or on other sides were built of brick masonry raised on the strong foundation of the stone structure down below. These were replaced and even repaired during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-85) along with the facades of some of the arcaded recesses and the gateway itself. In one arched recess on the western side deep holes were carved out by the royal couple for fixing the cradle in motion so as to enjoy nature's most gifted creation here. The emperor refers himself to the quantum of enjoyment he would cherish here. Feasts of cups were arranged and under his permission even his private attendants were asked to sit down before him. Their cups were filled and were served with peaches as a relish. They then returned to their abodes fully drunk.[39] The thrust of the forested mountains, the glittering water of the spring, running water into the garden much more beautified by the fountains and sweet smelling herbs and above all the buildings raised here gave the royal couple an immense pleasure. Both Jahangir and Nur Jahan loved Verinag above all other places.[40]

As in the case of Shalimar Bagh, the buildings originally initiated by Jahangir in 1619-20 were completed by his son Shahjahan in 1627 as is testified by the two inscriptions still on view at the site.

Under the direct patronage of these two emperors, the summer house at Verinag became a symbol of Mughal architecture of their reign amidst an environment of surpassing splendour. Curious in its designs, the arched cells around the spring, treatment of ceiling bound together edge to edge by a strong mortar, substantial bold projecting eaves or cornices constructed on richly carved brackets of the walls which in turn hold the miniature domes, make this monument a site of great and enchanting character.

In a similar set-up, ancient place of Acchabal was selected as an ideal place for laying out a garden by Nur Jahan which was at one time named Begamabad after her.[41] It is about 5 kms south-east of Anantnag and separates Kuthar (named after the Shiva temple and sacred spring of Papasudana-Kapateshvara) and Bring (named after the stream of that name) parganas and lies on the old route leading to the

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valley from plains. The water of the fountain head of the springs emerges with such a force that it could be termed as a stream or the river. The tanks, chutes and waterfalls always remain well watered and both in sound and speed of flow excels the other gardens.[42] Like that of Verinag, the place was a centre of worship in earlier days when it was known as *Aksavala* and the spring being the largest one in the valley as *Aksipala Naga*.[43] To its north-east and at a distance of 4 kms lies the sacred tank or the spring of Papasudana-Kapateshvara, an appellation of Shiva. This place too enjoyed a great reputation for its sanctity. Admirably situated, the spring at Acchabal was also known for its sweet, cold and refreshing water. The potentiality of the site must have prompted Nur Jahan to build a garden of her choice here.

Some have attributed this garden to Jahanara, daughter of emperor Shahjahan.[44] This surrounding landscape, the choice of spots for raising the summer houses on the traditional pattern adopted at Shalimar, arrangements for illumination in the carved recesses of the cascades and above all the absence of any type of religious establishment like *Khanqah* (free kitchen) or Madrasa (school or college) so dear to Jahanara or his brother Dara Shikoh, all put together lead to the conclusion that it was only the creative genius of Jahangir or his queen Nur Jahan.

Enclosed by a walled enclosure, the terraced garden is divided into three parts. The present day cart-road and the dak bungalow have disturbed the area of the lowest terrace. An old doorway built on the original pattern gives access to the second terrace. The pavilions have been restored during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. Only the bases of the former Mughal structures remain. However, the superstructures of these pavilions have relied largely on tradition but at the same time possessed a substantial work of architecture in the indigenous style.

These pillared pavilions were built amidst the running water and the stately chinar trees made the entire garden composition as enchanting. The main pavilion is a single storeyed hall open an all sides. Equally divided into bays, its foliated arches stand on the columns and hold the sloping roof. The water of the spring is initially accumulated into the tank from where it is then traversed in the side tanks, smaller in size, and also into three canals, the largest one being in the centre. These water channels pass through without any interruption culminating into an impressive falls at the end of each terrace. The tanks and the canals are lined with stones. The original arched cells raised against the rocky mountain on the upper terrace to enjoy the refreshing view of the garden stepping down the hill were intentionally smashed by the Parks and Garden department in early eighties. The only original structures, though in ruins, are the royal quarters and the *hamams* (Turkish baths). The bath suite had the elaborate provision of hot and cold baths and the dressing room. In the centre of the garden there was well guarded swimming pool for the ladies. The water to the compartments of the royal quarters and the *hamams* were

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drawn through the systematically laid out earthen pipes. The walls of the *hamams* were raised on the internal side higher than the outer enclosure wall so as to give the structure a sense of privacy. The source of the water feeding the royal quarters and the bathrooms was from the subterranean channel in the uppermost terrace of the garden. In the background of its natural set-up, its aloofness, its size, its constant flow of water and above all the structural perfections, this garden still holds a dominant place in the list of Mughal gardens of Kashmir.

The three main gardens, Shalimar, Acchabal and Verinag were the royal gardens. Besides, these Nur Jahan had designed her own garden, known as Jarokha Bagh on Manasbal lake. Her brother, Asaf Khan, laid another garden, one of the largest, on the bank of Dal lake known as Nishat Garden.

Nishat Bagh, the Garden of Gladness, could not have been started by Asaf Khan without the active support and blessings of his sister Nur Jahan or the emperor Jahangir, but with all the elaborate and comprehensive compositions associated with it, it lacks the refinement and the sublimity of the foregoing gardens. Initially the garden had twelve terraces each representing the signs of zodiac. The lowest terrace has been cut off by laying the modern road. It contained a tank with the fountains from where the water coming from the above flowed without break in to the Dal lake. The entry now to the second terrace is through two wooden doorways (later introduction) on either sides of the water channel. The facade of the cascade in the front carries a decoration of twenty-three niches which were meant for placing the clay lamps. When lit in the night these produced an unparalleled and colourful light reflected in the transparent water behind which they lay. The third terrace is approached through the two series of stone steps laid out on either side of the cascade and stand duly guarded by the standing wall of the same material. These steps survive to this date in their original form so also the stone and marble thrones placed on the edges of the most of the terraces. The water of the canal rushes beneath them. The view of the valley, with the snow-peaked mountains at the back, the vast Dal lake, the main water-channels and pools with fountain jets of the garden coupled with the fragrance of the flowers and the massiveness of the chinars give a matchless delight while sitting on these thrones.

A wooden *baradari*, in two storeys was raised over the stone throne of the Mughals by the then Governor of the valley, Wazir Pannu, during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh. It was all through enclosed by lattice work and entry in its ground or first floor gave a person full view of Dal lake in the front and of the rest of the garden with barren hills at the back. Unfortunately, after independence, the state government, not knowing the architectural value of the structure, got it destroyed on the plea that it obstacled the view of the lake and its environment from the higher terraces. This arbitrary action of the State Government was resented in

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Parliament and outside by academicians, archaeologists and connoisseurs of art. From here on either side of the water channel, series of stone steps lead to open terraces each rising higher than the one preceding it, till we reach the eleventh terrace which has a bigger and a beautiful marble throne at its edge spanning the water course and a tank with over two dozen fountains. Behind this terrace, is the most inspired achievement of the builder, Asaf Khan. It is the ladies' or *zenana* terrrace—the last unit of the garden. Its retaining wall about 20 feet high spans the full width of the garden. The retaining wall carries series of arches and the graceful octagonal tower provides an elegant and harmonious effect. It is a three-storeyed structure. The ground floor coincides with the retaining wall while its second storey with balcony is the main halting place for the ladies. Its third storey was to observe the remarkable display of the garden in its most grandiose form. The spaciousness of the garden and the buildings of great dignity successfully achieved by the strenuous efforts of Asaf Khan were greatly admired by Shahjahan when he paid a visit to the valley in 1633. He expected that the garden would be offered to him for the royal acceptance which was refused by the builder. In disgust, he diverted the stream feeding the garden towards his own royal garden at Shalimar and thus left Asaf Khan disconsolate. However, the devotion of his faithful servant who risked his life and restored himself the water back for his master's garden against his own wishes brought upon him the moments of admiration instead of punishment by Shahjahan. Thereafter, the builder of the garden was given full rights to draw the water from the Shalimar stream.[45] On the other hand, this left the garden poorer from the architectural side. Shahjahan would have enriched the garden in an architectural style of exceptional splendour. He evinced a very keen personal interest in the art of architecture. Asaf Khan's buildings in stone and bricks would have been replaced by white marble. He utilised this material in almost all the buildings raised by his predecessors in India and it is for this purpose that his building art is known as the age of marble.

The genius for the monumental architecture during the reign of Jahangir is exemplified by Pathar Masjid or the Stone Mosque built by empress Nur Jahan in 1623.

Situated in the heart of Srinagar city, on the left bank of river Jhelum opposite to Shah-i-Hamadan mosque near Zainakadal, the Pathar Masjid also known as Shahi Mosque is the only surviving example of the Mughal mosque built in stone instead of indigenous wooden material. Architecturally its style is practically the same as that at Agra, Delhi and Lahore and as such it has been emphasised that it has no outstanding architectural merit.[46] But in Kashmir it has its own importance since it is first of the religious buildings raised in stone without being affected by the local architecture in wood. In its construction uniform design, material and tech-

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nique has been employed and at the same time undue severity has been avoided.[47] In short it was the first attempt aiming at a form of architecture in which in course of time much more dignified and powerful structures could have been raised. Even in the present structure, the use of white marble was avoided only because of the difficulties of transport for bringing the same from the plains. Nur Jahan, therefore, emphasized in raising the structure in the local material available in stone or grey limestone. The latter material is exceptionally good for moulding, carving and for receiving the high polish. The workmanship on the stone clearly indicate that the temple stones were not utilised in building this mosque even if two such temples existed in the vicinity. One such structure known as Zayathesena Bhairva lies to its north and closer to the river bank and the other was the shrine of Vishaksena Bhairva situated towards its west at Dalal Mohalla. Now both these shrines have been turned into graveyards.[48]

Unlike the foundations of the temple structures, it has been raised on a firm and solid foundation by digging the ground about 1.5 metres below the surface level. The dug out area has been filled up with brick bats, stone debris fully rammed and then over it lime *zeera* and *surkhi* mortar have been laid out. In case of the temples, the stones were laid out directly over the earth which in most cases formed the loessic deposit.

In the summer of 1982, a small trench was laid out near the staircases on the northern side. Besides revealing the nature of the material used for the foundation it was observed that the foundation was covered by a series of plain stone courses, the top course which surmounted these bears lotus-leaf coping. Further probing in the open courtyard indicated that it was initially stone flagged. These stones were removed during the Sikh regime. There were also no remains of ablution tank which is normally associated with a mosque and it suggests that the entire area was open and the river water was directly being utilised for that purpose. Traces of few isolated staircases were found when the houses which had sprung over the bank were dismantled by the Archaeological Survey of India by paying huge sums as compensation to the owners in order to give an original look to the mosque. This was done at the instance of late Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla. The project fell through after his death.

The chief beauty of the mosque lies in its external architectural effect. It is represented by the pleasing distribution of the foliated arches forming its frontage. The prayer chamber of the mosque is approached through the porch in the centre with four arched openings on either of its sides. The insertion of grey limestone in these arches of the facade give this monument a very graceful look. The felicitous proportion of these arches including the porch and with their foliated curves represents the magnificent architectural scheme executed under the personal direction of

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Nur Jahan. As a matter of fact the cusped or foliated arch is the hallmark of Mughal architecture. It has played a long and significant role in the history of Indian architecture.[49] These arched compositions on the front side are also the main source of light and shade to the prayer hall. The prayer chamber is a pillared hall with perforated stone windows on the southern and northern sides. In this columned hall, the pillars are so situated that they provide open spaces for offering the prayers. The central space forms the nave. The columns are square with their lower portion built in stones and the upper of bricks. The central wing has the *mehrab* of usual type on the western wall. Besides there are shallow arched recesses provided on this side. Small recesses have also been provided on the upper portions of the columns for placing earthen lamps so as to give light to the devotees while offering evening prayers or on special occasions during the night hours. The columns, walls and the ceilings are painted in buff coloured lime plaster. The pillars connected by the arches projected across the length of the compartment support the domical ceiling. A long range of wide arches of the cloister form the most remarkable element in the interior of the mosque and in the process also hold the weight of the domes above which number twenty-seven, the central one being the largest. The access to the upper storey or its internal floor is provided through the staircases laid out on either sides of the porch itself. Further these steps lead to the roof of the mosque. Small perforated stone windows have also been provided in the supporting wall of the staircases from the courtyard side which serve as ventilators to these. A long series of parapet walls in descending order on either side of the largest one in the centre has transformed the storey into a group of compartments which form the integral part of the architectural composition. The top portion of these walls here also support the vaulted ceiling of the roof. These walls along with combination of arches, cornice and the void of the vaulted ceiling reflect a harmonious combination. The light to these units comes from the ornamental lotus leaves some of which have been pierced. These decorated the part of the entablature between architrave and projecting cornice. The surprising element observed here is that there is no evidence of domed roofing of the structure nor the void left here indicate any sign of double doming practised by the Mughals in northern India. The constructional system adopted here by the artisans was no doubt peculiar but befitting the climatic conditions of the valley. The sloping roof was laid out by stone slates and the space was minimised by employing earthen pipes. The voids and the top were then covered with the usual Mughal mortar. The projection of the cornice was supported by closely ranked decorated brackets. The enclosure wall round the mosque was built in brick masonry with shallow niches provided at intervals.

On the whole, the mosque though simple in its design, is a notable illustration of the Mughal art and is ranked as a production of high order.

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The mosque was not used as a place of prayers probably after its completion on the plea that Nur Jahan when questioned about its cost, compared it with that of her jewelled slipper. Obviously this was brazenly insensitive to Muslim feelings and was declared unworthy for any religious act. This old tradition was, however, cut across in late seventies when late Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla himself led the gathering for Friday prayers into the mosque. The monument received a new lease of life and important conservation measures were undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India so as to maintain its originality.

Shahjahan ascended the throne of Delhi after the death of his father and his reign in India is especially known for the unique development in the art of architecture. Magnificent architectural schemes were introduced and numerous buildings were raised by him which still prove the glory and the splendour of the emperor. In Kashmir, he took his resort at the royal garden of Shalimar and did not take keen interest in raising any significant structures as he did at Lahore, Delhi or Agra. However, he patronized the projects undertaken by his noted engineer-cum-builder, architect, comptroller, statesman and sometimes governor in Kashmir, Ali Mardan Khan, and his own saintly son Dara Shikoh and daughter Jahanara.

Ali Mardan Khan's main contribution was that he built a number of *sarais* and rest-houses along the Pir Panjal route from India to Kashmir. These monuments are impressive memorials of Mughal power. The size and magnitude of these notable structures could be imagined when crowds of grandes, long line of elephants, horses and innumerable porters on their way to happy valley used to have a temporary respite and refreshment for preparing themselves on their further hazardous journey. In the heart of city of Srinagar and at a distance of 8 kms from it, he laid out a garden of Chashma-i-Shahi, the royal spring completed in 1632, the builder attributed it to his master Shahjahan.

This three-terraced garden spread out on the slopes of the hill commands a magnificent look of Dal lake and the two islands of Sunalank and Rupalank with hills and snowy ranges of mountains at the background. The garden is provided with its usual avenues, pathways, long series of staircases leading to the first two terraces, tanks, fountains, cascades, channels and other water devices. It is famous for the cool and pure water which bubbles up through a lotus basin built in the centre of the second terrace. Visitors to the garden, do not miss to taste a glass of water from the spring.

Ali Mardan Khan after the completion of garden at Chashma-i-Shahi undertook the difficult work of constructing the canal for feeding the proposed garden of Shalimar Bagh at Lahore in 1633. It turned out to be the most notable example of a Mughal garden in India when it was ready finally for a ceremonial visit of the emperor. More or less on a similar design, he laid out an another garden in the

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vicinity of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin's capital at Naushera in 1653 which was named after him as 'Bagh-i-Ali Mardan Khan'. It has now been turned into government industrial area.

The other two buildings of exceptional merit in the valley built during the reign of Shahjahan by his eldest son Dara Shikoh and Jahanara, his daughter, are Akhun Mulla Shah Mosque and Pari Mahal. Both these structures were built for their spiritual preceptor, Shah Muhammad *alias* Mulla Shah (1585-1661), a reputed Qadri saint. He himself was the disciple of a renowned saint of the Qadri order Mian Mir Lahori (1550-1635). Mulla Shah decided to settle in Kashmir after the death of his preceptor but before his death in 1661, he again visited Lahore where he died and was buried there in the vicinity of the tomb of Mian Mir. Both of them were highly revered by the emperor Shahjahan. The saint had a soft corner for Dara Shikoh and Jahanara for their liberal and tolerant attitude in matters of religious beliefs. Shahjahan visited Mulla Shah first in 1634 and then in 1651 when he came to see the mosque and Khanqah built for him in the valley. His permanent abode was a beautiful spot at the slope of Hariparbat hill which contained a mosque, Khanqah and a garden with two fountains, Chashma-i-Simla and Chashma-i-qutla constructed by his princely disciples—Dara Shikoh and Jahanara. Mulla Shah used to pay visits to these fountains in the garden. He considered them superior to all other buildings, fountains and gardens of Kashmir.[50] The entire structural area and the garden were within the fort of Hariparbat built by their great grandfather, Akbar.[51] In fact, it was Dara Shikoh who had inherited the love of nature, interest and skill from his grandfather and father and as such the construction of these two structures with the gardens attached to these are attributed to him alone. He, therefore, selected a well guarded and beautiful place inside the wall of Hariparbat fort where he built a residential house of dressed stones for Mulla Shah which cost him 60,000 rupees.[52]

The construction of Akhun Mulla Shah mosque and other buildings was patronized by Shahjahan himself who must have felt pleased in seeing such exquisite forms grow under the supervision of their children.

The Mosque of Akhun Mulla Shah was raised on the slope of Hariparbat hill below the shrine of Makhdum Sahib. The area so selected was in tune with its godly environs. Situated within a courtyard, the mosque is a two-storeyed building predominantly built of grey limestone over a core of brick work. The exterior of the mosque is of an excellent workmanship, its facade on either sides of the gateway are rectangular panels enclosing cusped arches carved on highly polished grey limestone lending an impression of austere dignity to the monument. Another admirable conception is the middle of the back wall, where the projection on the external front has produced a well-planned recessed *mehrab* in the interior. The

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arches, engrailed or pointed have divided the interior into bays, thus providing sufficient space on the other side of the prayer chamber as well. The windows provided on the external wall on the southern side were meant for clear vision of the natural setting and the garden down below. While staying inside, they could also help the wings to remain airy and cool. A little probing in the courtyard of the mosque itself gave clue to a drain carved into its floor which points out that the saint apart from offering prayers used to reside here also, since most of the time he would spend in meditation. Inside the drain, rusted element was observed which also makes it out that it was used for flow of waste water used for personal use. The drain went inside the southern wing from where the water was further drawn out through earthen pipes in the garden down below or beyond. A part of the aisle on the northern side was, in that case, utilised as a Khanqah or saintly establishment. For ablution purposes, there was a tank outside the mosque in the outer courtyard. It is said that he meditated here in the darkness since he did not even had a lamp in this abode of his. When Dara Shikoh one night visited him, he expressed that he would not light the lamp in that desolate cell since his (Dara Shikoh's) love itself illuminates it.[53] For attendants and devotees in general, a range of cells were provided in the enclosure wall on the northern side and on the lower level of the structure on eastern and southern sides as well. A little further off towards the east is the *hamam* (a Turkish bath). On the lintel of its doorway, is the inscription which gives the date of the complex as A.H. 1059 corresponding to the year 1649. On the same level, was the ornamented garden enclosed by the fort wall of Akbar's capital city Nagar-Nagar on the southern side, while it was encircled by the various components of the mosque on the other side. The access to the second storey was through the staircases laid out on either sides of the gateway of the mosque. The upper storey was more or less like a whispering gallery. It included corridors, open portals, small ventilators, chambers and corner rooms. On the roof of the corner room on the southern side, is the stone lotus finial which happened to be the only surviving example of the medieval times.[54] It specifies the combination of an architectural creation influenced mainly by the religious fervour which had kindled a spiritual fire in the saint and the builder.

Situated in the open courtyard, this conventional mosque has an unusual plan, equally unique feature of double storeyed cloisters, combination of arcades extending on each side to form the wings resolving the interior of the sanctuary into a nave at the ground floor. All these grouped together with the fine proportion of its different components make it a typical example of architectural style of the times.

Contemporary with the mosque, are the ruins of Pari Mahal or fairy palace perched on the Zabarwan hill to the west of Chashma-i-Shahi spring and south-east of Dal lake. Its construction is also ascribed by tradition to Dara Shikoh who named

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it after his wife Nadira Begum also known as Pari Begum. Built at the instance of his tutor Akhun Mulla Shah, it was a residential school of Sufism.[55] It is a suitable place for seclusion and informal living. It is also said that it was an observatory or a school of astrology and astronomy. The Mughal emperors right from Babar had high regards for astrologers and they held important and reponsible positions in their courts.[56]

Magnificently situated, the structural remains and the terraced garden at Pari Mahal provide a perfect fusion of building and gardening skill. Divided into six terraces, it differs from other Mughal gardens of the valley as it does not possess any cascades, water chutes, waterfalls or the regular layout of canals. Barring one, there existed ornamental pools and fountains in the five terraces. The water was brought into the terraces and the tanks through underground earthen pipes. Its monumental gateway was from Dal lake side and in the middle of the enclosure wall of the sixth terrace. Outside, there are the ruins of the plinth which could have been guard room structure.

In the middle of the sixth terrace at the bottom there was a tank from where the water used to flow into Dal lake through the earthen pipes, traces of which were recently located just a few paces below. On the extreme ends of the tank were octagonal bastions to support the enclosure wall as it happened to be the pronounced part of the slope of the hill.

The next higher terrace presents a more striking appearance. On its upper side, there is a tank with a pavilion the upper half of which displays perforated square holes. It is merely an architectural decoration decidedly more curious than beautiful. These were not intended to harbour flocks of pigeons as observed earlier.[57] Mughals who were the lovers of natural beauty would never have liked to get the water or the atmosphere spoiled by the refuse of these birds. Another significant feature of this is that the retaining wall of the pavilion has a double row of arches. The upper ones face a corridor which runs on both sides of its plinth.

The fourth terrace displays the remains of a tank projected beyond the retaining wall of this terrace. It was initially enclosed in a pavilion, and the flow of the water was made to run through earthen pipes, traces of which were found in its northern side. Elaborately ornamented, the next three higher terraces were meant for the royal use. In the royal portion of the garden, the third terrace was most decoratively treated and admirably suited for the purpose for which the garden was originally laid out.

Structurally the third terrace is the most distinctive part of the garden. Apart from the pathways in the interior of the garden, it can also be approached through an elegant brick-built arched gate on the east. There are royal residential apartments on either side of the gate. In addition to the central chamber with a usual domed

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roof in front of the entrance gateway, there were chambers on its either sides. There are still visible traces of fine plaster on the walls with which these were originally coated. On its north was the *hamam* with water pipes so arranged that the chamber could be heated in cold weather. On its south, the two set of rooms were the kitchen and the other as the rest camp. Quite probably there were similar set of rooms on the western half of the retaining wall. Irregular stones which exist here could be the remains of their plinth. In the middle of the retaining wall of the terraces on the southern side, is a *baradari* or a pavilion with openings on its sides. From the opposite side, water came from the above terrace through hidden earthen pipe and flowed through an open channel, a unique feature of the terrace. The water in the middle of the chamber formed a small tank from where the water further flowed again through pipes into the terrace below.

In the middle of the second terrace and in front of the pavilion, there is a rectangular tank which now stands completely renovated. The facade of the retaining wall of the first terrace here is the typical model of architectural style. It is relieved by a series of twenty-one recessed arches including the two corner ones on either sides of the stairs. The introduction of increasing use of arches in descending order of height from the centre has added grace to this wall. Each of them in turn is surmounted again by a niche, the height of which increases in proportion to decrease in the height of the arch.

The first and the top most terrace has a pavilion and a reservoir. Overlooking Dal lake, the pavilion is built of rubble stones and its facade is provided with two small arches. The reservoir built against the hill was fed by a spring about a km above through earthen pipes. Now except the noble flight of steps at each corner of the terrace nothing of the original feature is so vividly observable. These very steps lead to the terraces below which too in many terraces stand obliterated.

The foregoing architectural specimens were built by Dara Shikoh or his sister who were excellent subjects for spiritual education as discovered by Mulla Shah. Jahanara Begum had remarked that out of all the descendants of Timur she and her brother only were fortunate to go on the spiritual path as none of their forefathers had trodden this path in quest of God.[58] However, they could carry on with the construction of these buildings for their preceptor only with the blessings of their father.

Shahjahan is said to have built a mosque in the Mughal garden laid out by his nobleman, Sadiq Khan on the western bank of Dal lake overlooking the vast expanse of its water. The garden in those days was known as Bagh-i-Sadiqabad. Built on the pattern of Mughal style, the roof was in three tiers being the traditional form of Islamic architecture in Kashmir. It was as such a curious mixture of Kashmiri and Mughal architecture. The interior walls were painted with beautiful floral pan-

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els which provided a vision of loveliness in its sanctuary. The emperor offered prayers in the mosque in 1634, the first year of his visit to the valley. The mosque came into prominence when the Prophets' hair was placed here in the year 1699 and since then being the custodian of the holy relic the mosque is famous as Hazrat Bal.

The original structure was altogether rebuilt in the year 1969 by late Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla. In its place, as a result of his personal devotion to the sacred site, a new marble mosque came into being on the pattern of Prophet's Mosque of Medina.

The reign of Aurangzeb or of his successors marks the decline of the Mughal architecture because of their indifference towards the art of building. His noteworthy contribution is that he reconstructed the Jama Masjid more stronger and majestic than ever before its destruction by the fire in 1674 for the third time. The other notable event of his reign in the valley is the arrival of holy relic of the Prophet's hair which was housed with great enthusiasm at the mosque constructed by his father. He also rebuilt Ali Masjid at Idgah which was built originally in 16th century but had fallen due to negligence.

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11

History and Archaeology

Afghan, Sikh and Dogra Period (1753-1947 A.D.)

The Afghans who followed Mughals ruled the valley for 66 years (1753-1819). Like the Mughals, their representatives, governors or deputy governors were at the helm of affairs. The Afghans were harsh and oppressive. Shia-Sunni conflict communal riots were the order of the day. Economic prosperity quickly deteriorated. The peace and order once again dwindled into insignificance. No attention was paid to the building activity when discontent, poverty and oppression prevailed. Still their Governor, Amir Khan Jawansher (1770-76) constructed the Shergarhi Fort which included the present area of Old Secretariat, Deputy Commissioner's office and part of the present day High Court premises. The present Kutkul (ancient Ksiptika) which flows from the main river on the left bank, a little below the Badshah bridge, passed through the fort premises. On its bank some fort material is still being observed.

In 1810, another Governor, Atta Muhammad Khan Alkozai enlarged Akbar's citadel on the Hariparbat hillock, by constructing the outer wall with massive bastions and by adding the barracks in the interior of the fort and also by laying out the tank. He also built forts at important town of Sopore and Baramulla in order to make his position secure from internal or external troubles. However, with increase in oppressive and tyrannical measures on the internal front, there was widespread political, economic and cultural degradation. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the ruler of Punjab, conquered Kashmir in 1819 and thus brought an end to the oppressive rule of Kashmir. All heaved a sigh of relief.[1]

The Sikh rule lasted for 27 years only, i.e. from 1819 to 1846. It was a passing phase and no contribution stands to their credit. During this period of twenty-seven years, the valley was ruled by ten Sikh governors. Even during these days of instability, the minority community valued the sentiments of their Muslim brothers and maintained the communal harmony. The second governor, Dewan Moti Ram had advised the commander of the Sikh army, Phula Singh to demolish the mosque of Jama Masjid but was later on desisted from doing so by an adventurous member

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of Brahman community, Pandit Bir Bal Dhar.[2] Sikh rule over Kashmir came to an end after their defeat in the first Anglo-Sikh war. By the treaty of Amritsar (1846), it was transferred by the British to one Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu.

Raja Gulab Singh, a Dogra, gave the proof of his sincerity, bravery and high spirit of valour when he was able to curb down the turbulent hill tribes of Khashas and Bombas who mainly occupied the Vitasta valley below Baramulla. They had from early times proved troublesome neighbours the valley. In 1846 encouraged by the Gujars of Poonch district, they made marauding inroads into the valley and killed in the process many innocent people. Their further plundering operations were stopped by Maharaja Gulab Singh who was able to crush them and silence them for a pretty long time. He was already related to the history and rise of the Sikh kingdom of Lahore. The conquest of Ladakh and Baltistan under the able and efficient command of General Zorawar Singh gave him an opportunity to carve a separate State of Jammu and Kashmir for himself. In February 1856, he was succeeded by his son Ranbir Singh.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh was a patron of art and learning. He donated a sum of one lakh rupees to Punjab University and became its first Fellow. He also assisted Sanskrit institutions at Banaras and even made provision for study of Sanskrit for the students of the State. In 1865, he occupied the frontier post of Gilgit. It was regarded as the expansionist policy of the Maharaja and in view of Russian advance in Central Asia, the British took keen interest in the principalities situated on the outskirts of the Kashmir frontier which included Daradi valleys of Chitral, Yassin and Gilgit. He died on 15th September 1885 and was succeeded by his eldest son Pratap Singh.

Maharaja Pratap Singh's accession opened a new chapter in the history of the modern Kashmir. Two cart roads, one down the Jhelum valley and another over the Banihal Pass were built. Again in view of the Russian threat of invasion over India, the British wanted a strong government to tackle the socio-political problems of the State. On 1st April 1889, he was deprived of his administrative authority which henceforth was to be handled by the Council of Regency under the control of British Resident. The Maharaja undertook a tour of the frontier post upto Gurez and beyond so far as Bangla and issued orders for immediate redress of the grievances of the people inhabiting these areas.[3] With improvement on all the fronts, the British again restored full powers to Maharaja in March 1921. He was devoted to Sanskrit learning. He created a 'Translation Bureau', now the present Department of Research and Publication. During his time the German orientalist, Prof. J. George Buhler visited the valley and took away valuable manuscripts in Persian and Sanskrit. He died in 1925 and was succeeded by his nephew Hari Singh.

Maharaja Hari Singh was a young man of considerable capability, vigour and

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possessed a charming personality. He adopted a conciliation policy and made efforts to bring about an intelligent and effective cooperation among the different communities. Still the people rose against the rule of monarchy and held an open demonstration, the first of its kind, on July 13, 1931. The seed of disharmony and mistrust was sown. Subsequently with the change in the political system of India, the despotic rule of Dogras also came to an end in August 1947.

On the whole the artistic or the architectural style adopted by the Dogras appears mostly of Mughal extraction. In some of the ancient buildings, attempts have been made to retain their originality. During the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, on the inspiration of his Governor, Wazir Pannu, the Mughal gardens were saved from further decay. Their glory was maintained by raising pavilion or *Baradaries* in wood over the original basements so as to preserve the structural system adopted by the Mughals. Till late such structures were observed at the famous gardens of Nishat, Acchabal and Verinag. So also in the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh, a high committee was appointed under overall control of the State Government to undertake the repairs of Jama Masjid which had been neglected for a long time. While maintaining its stately grandeur, its roof was covered by layers of birch bark and mud, that being the original method of coverage against rain or snow. Unfortunately, this waterproof strata was replaced by G.I. sheets in 1953.[4]

The other few structures raised during the reign of Dogra rulers carry frequent introduction of foliated arches, oriel windows, shallow or elliptical cornices supported on brackets. Buildings of this kind existed even till late sixties in the office complex of Old Secretariat (now almost remodelled and reconstructed), present Assembly chambers (under demolition) and the royal temple closeby known as Gadadar temple and Rama's temple at Safakadal. The last one mentioned in the series is within a walled courtyard and is raised on a high platform with cusped arched openings on all the four sides. The main shrine is surrounded by circumambulatory passage the inner walls of which are painted with floral design in the borders and display various scenes of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and other Puranic records. This is the only surviving example in the valley of the most remarkable development of the Dogra school of paintings which besides Basohli and Jammu proper spread to other centres like Mankot, Bhadrawah, Jasrota, Nurpur, Chamba, Mandi, Guler and Kulu.

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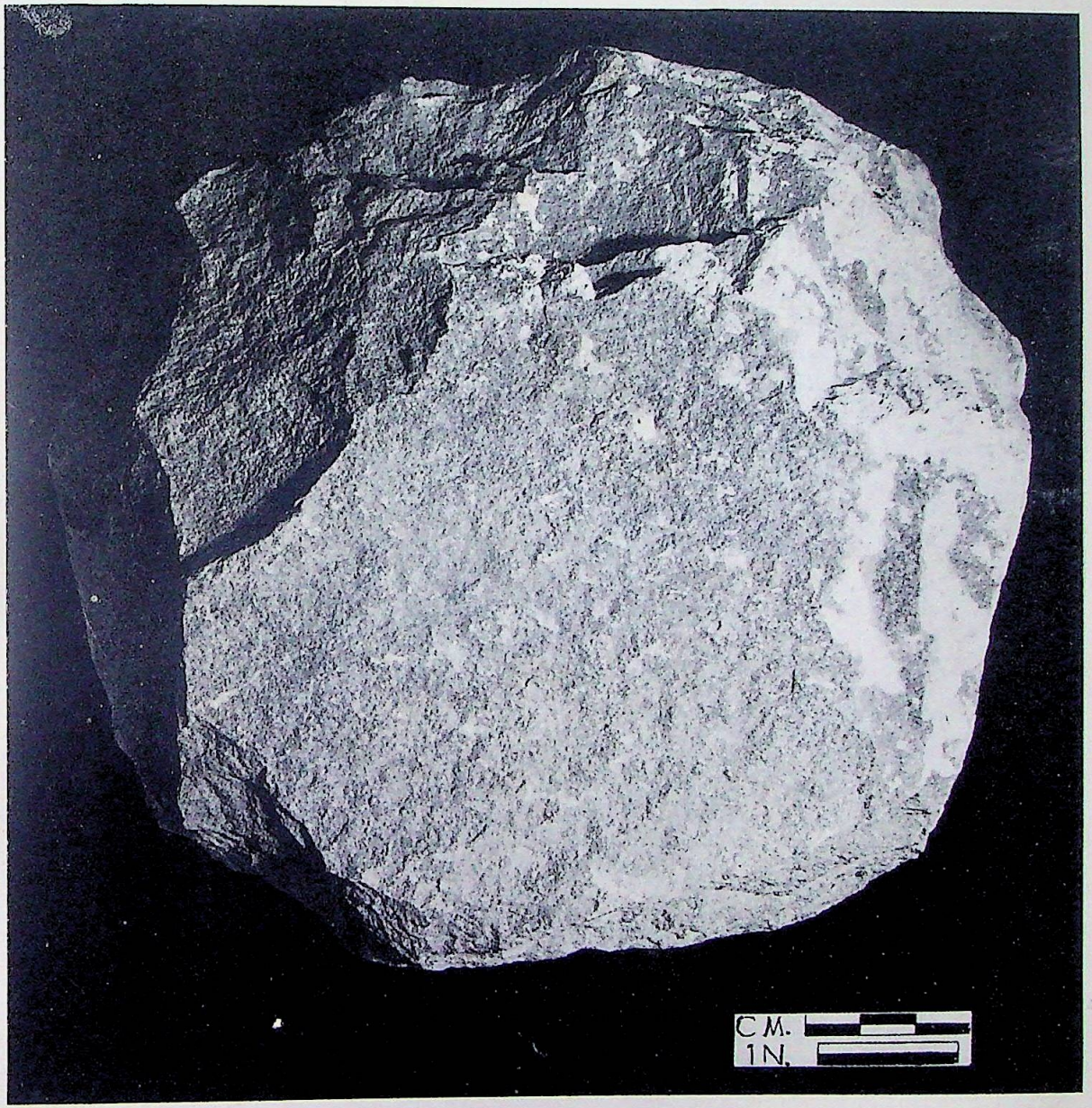

1. Chopper-type tool, Balapura, Shopian, Kashmir.

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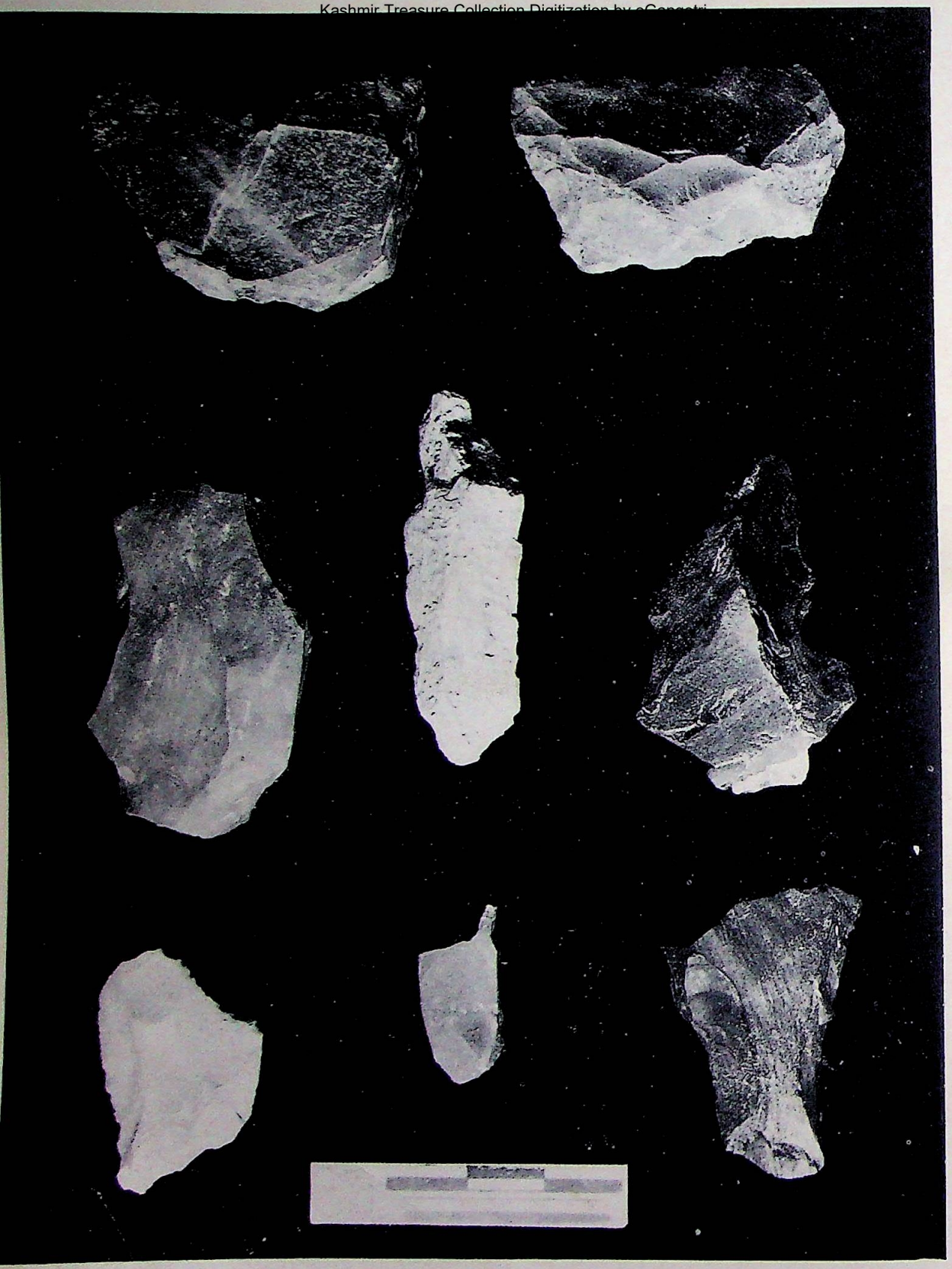
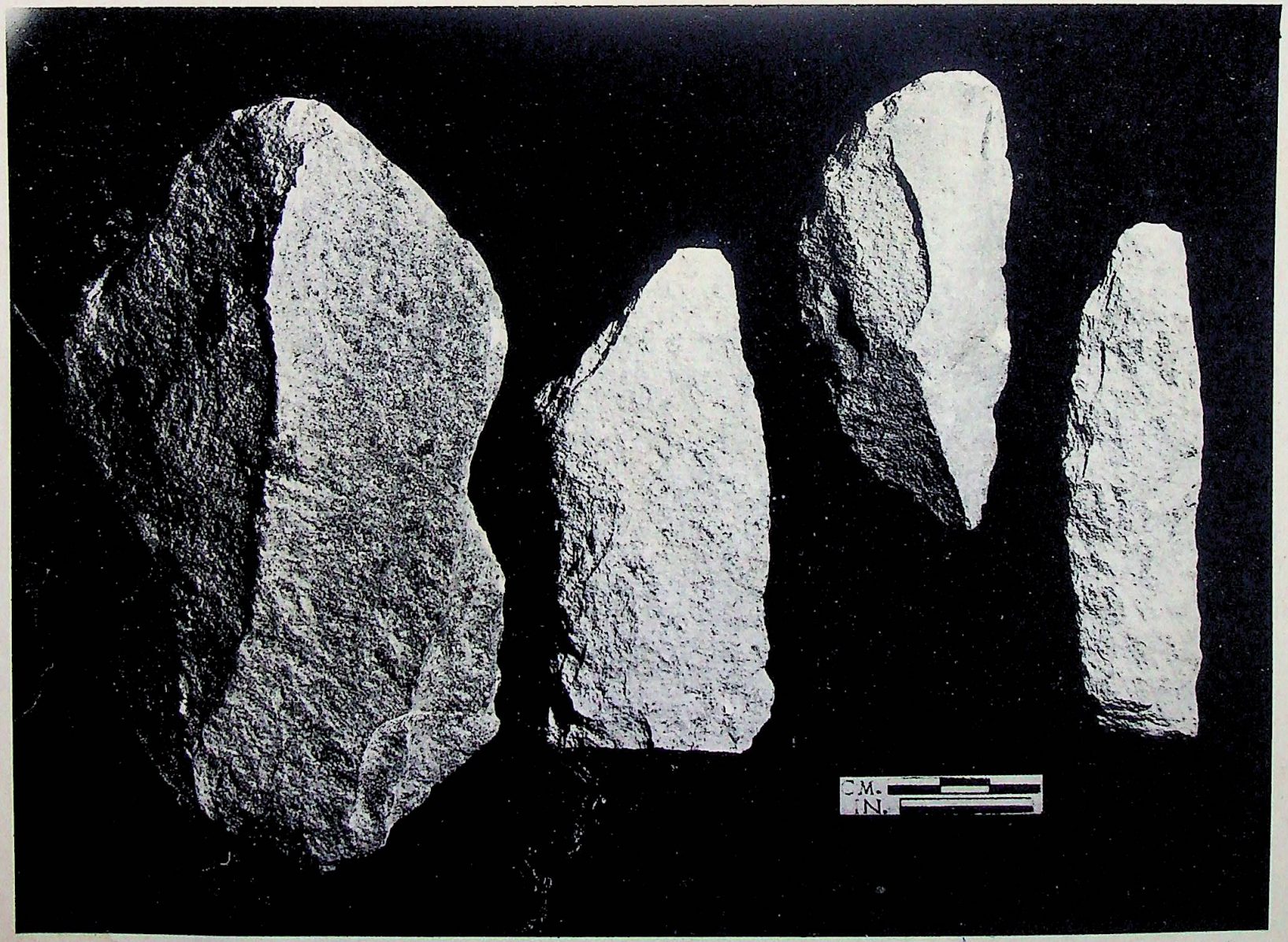


2. Lithic industry from Sombur, district Pulwama.



3. Lithic assemblage from Kuladur, Tapribala (Pattan), district Baramulla.

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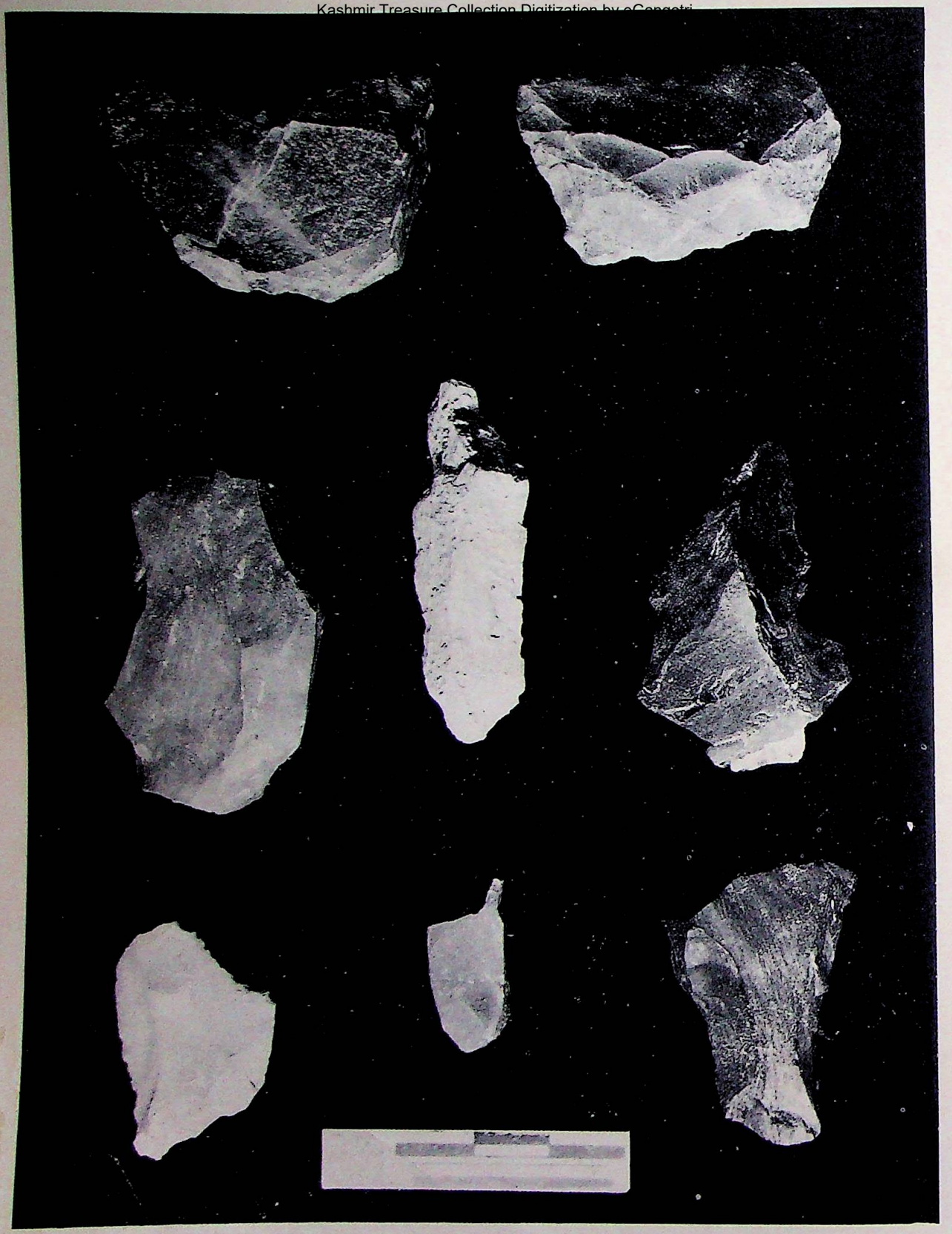
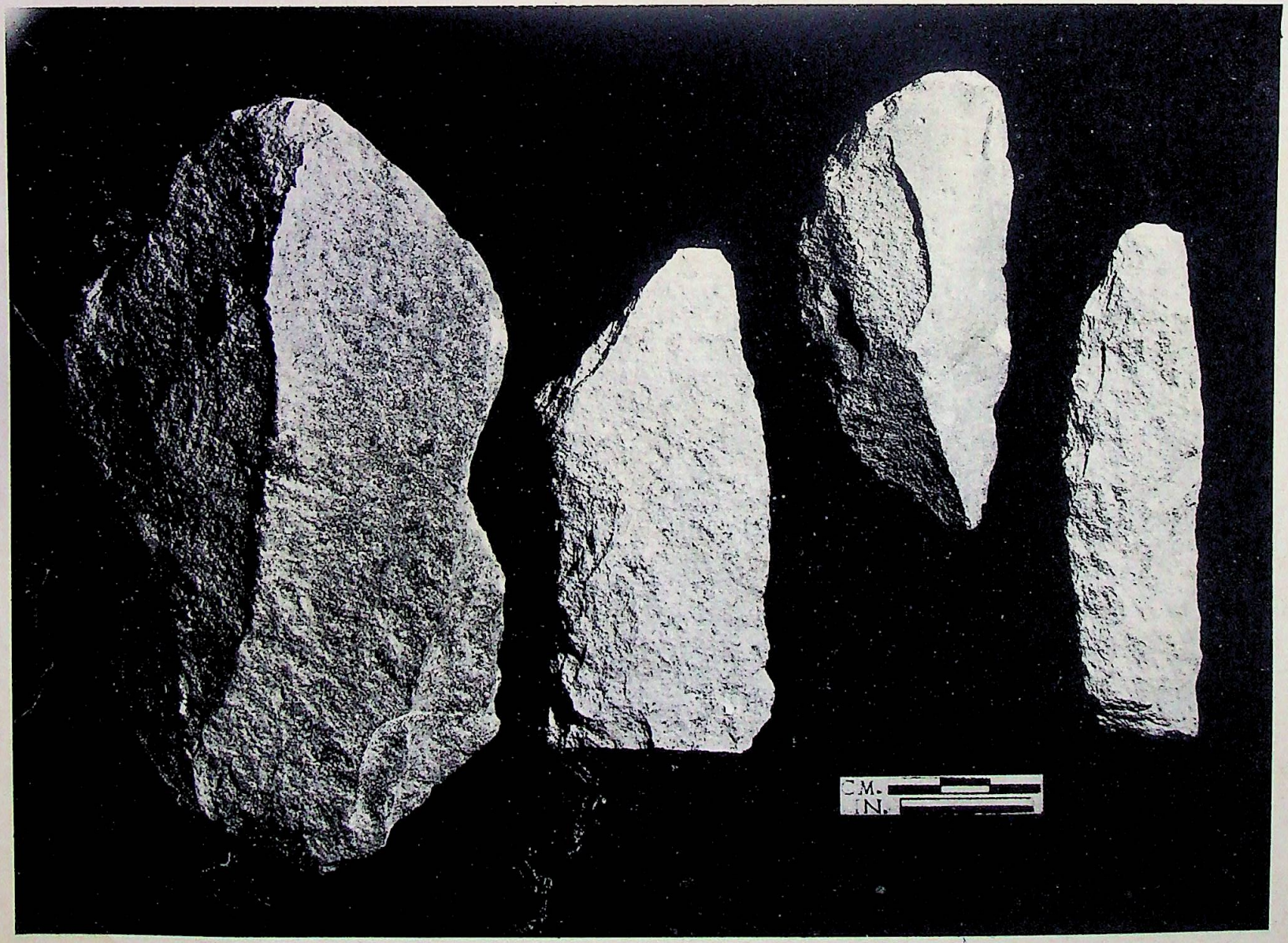


2. Lithic industry from Sombur, district Pulwama.



3. Lithic assemblage from Kuladur, Tapribala (Pattan), district Baramulla.

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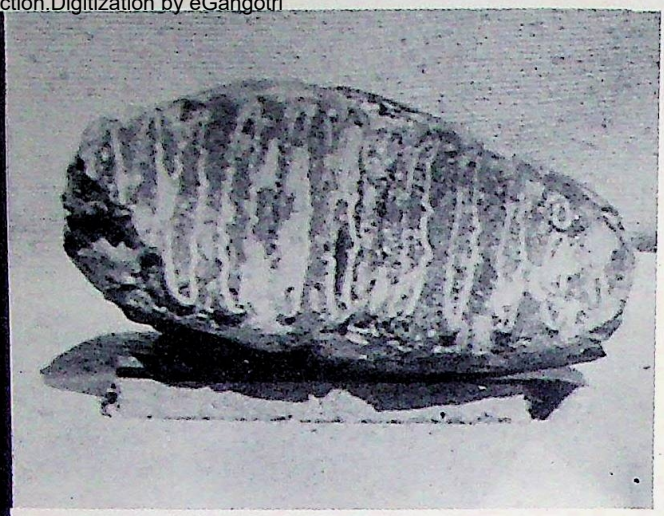
. Chopper from Sukhnag (Gulmarg-Tosh Maidan route), district Baramulla.



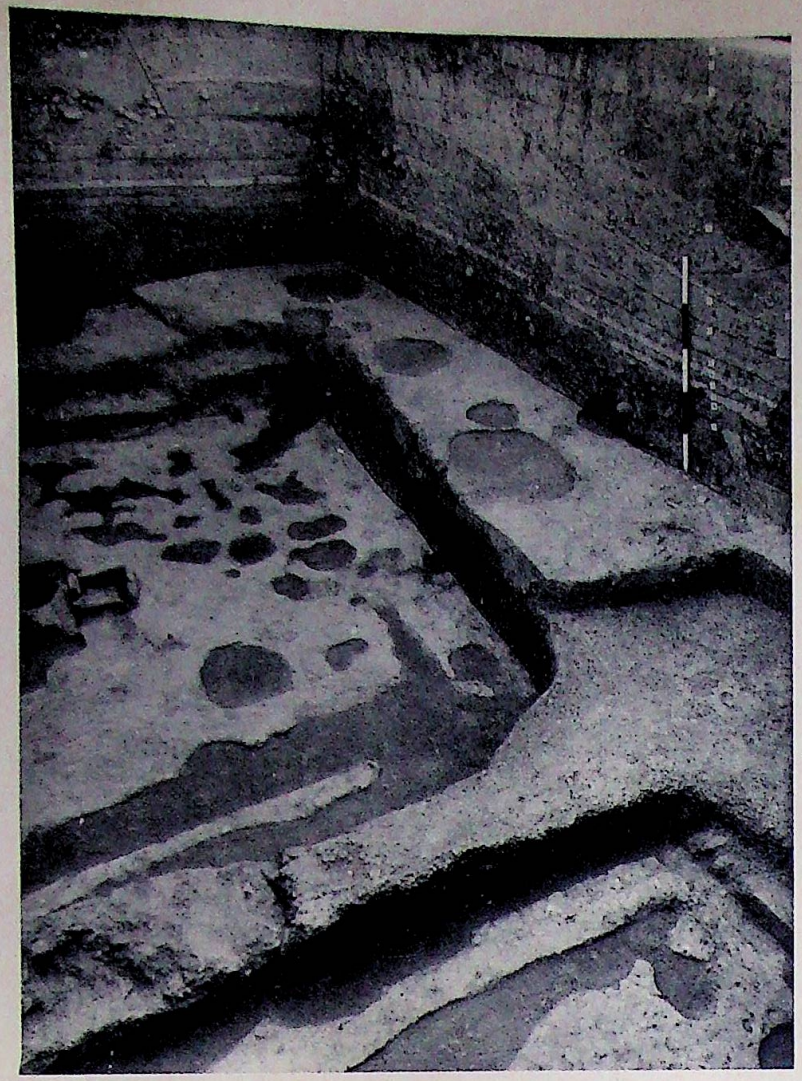
5. Fossilized tooth of an Elephas from Sombur, district Pulwama.

6. Prehistoric life style from Burzahom (Period I).

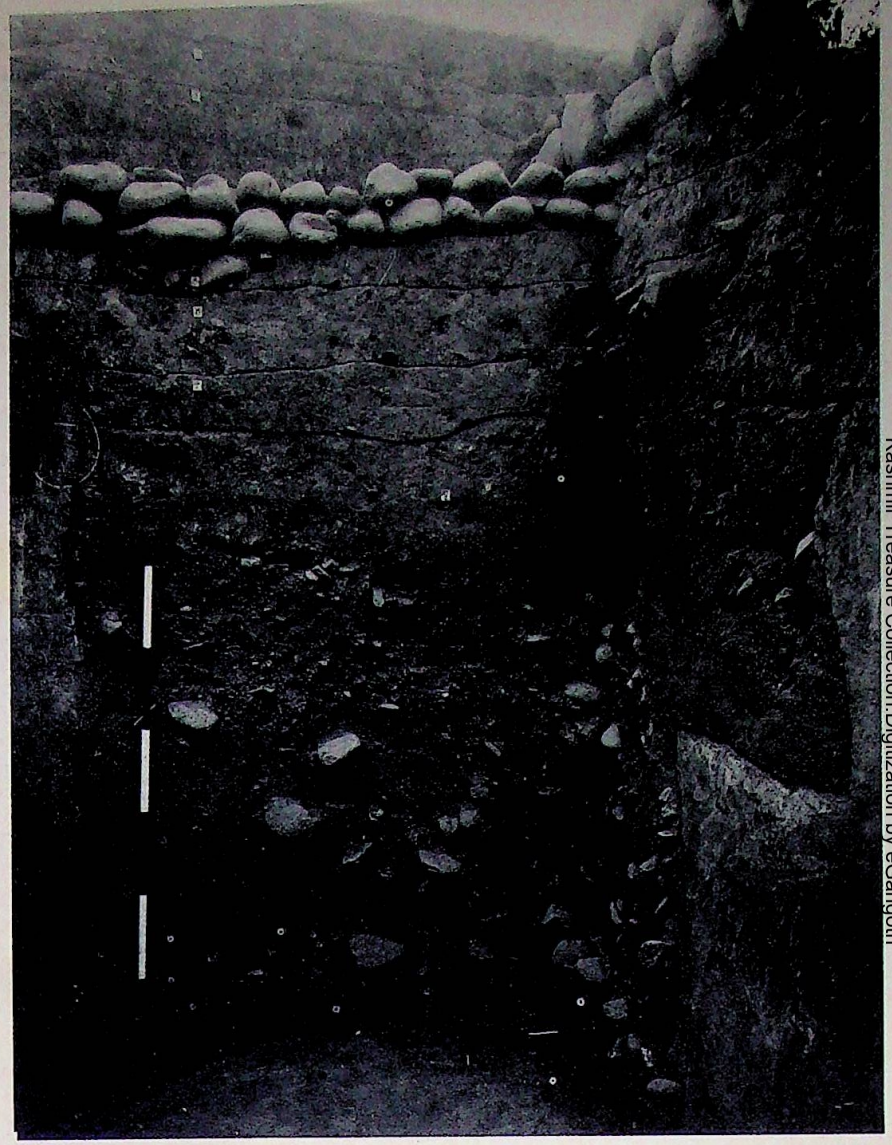
Kashmir Treasure Collection Digitization by eGangotri

7. An edge of a stone axe from Prang, Kangan (on Srinagar-Leh road), district Srinagar.

8. General view of neolithic-cum-megalithic site, Burzahom, district Srinagar.

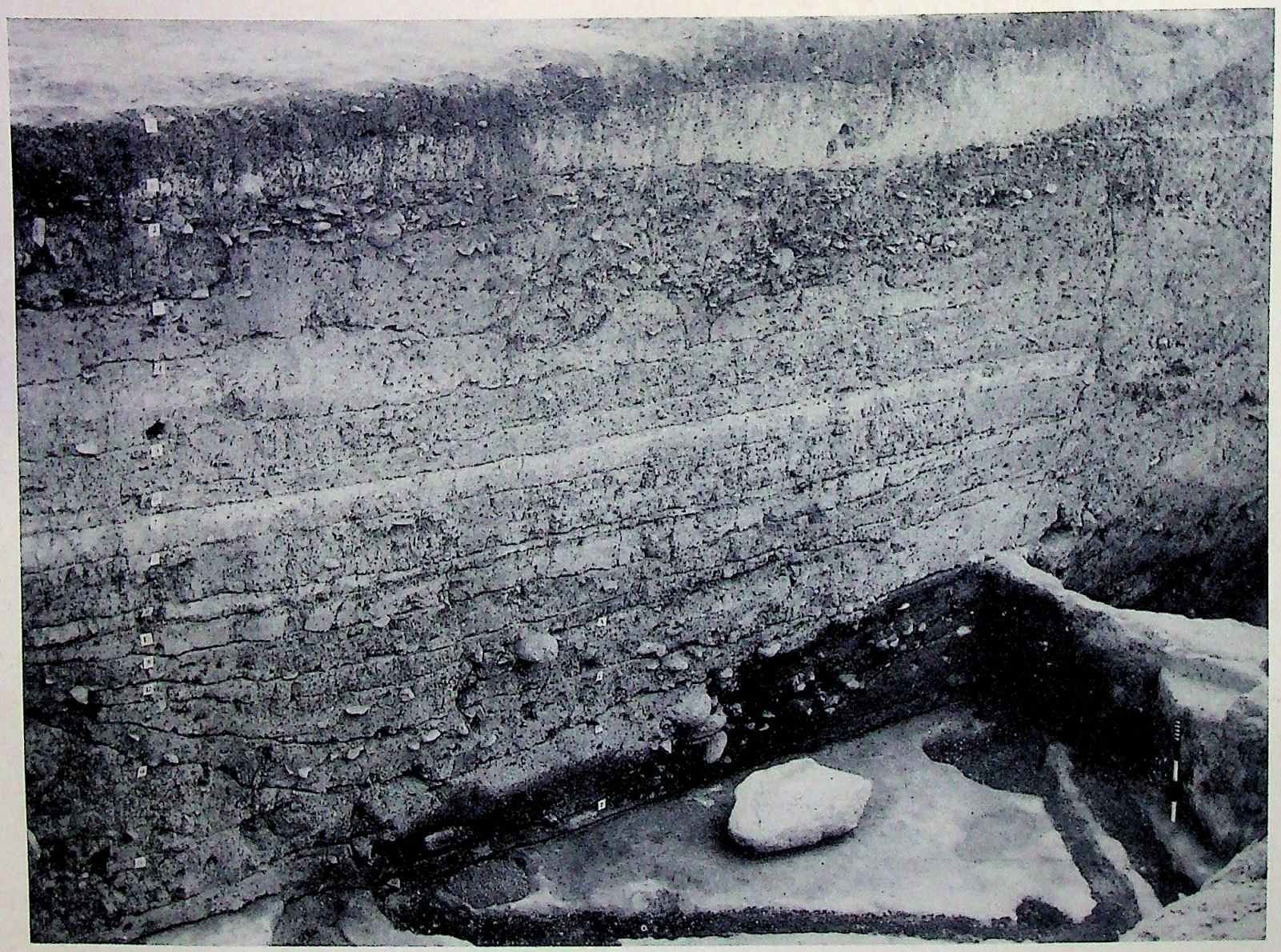


10. Pit chamber and succeeding floor levels from Burzahom, district Srinagar.



9. Dwelling pit with a step sealed by Period II deposit and a stone wall of megalithic period.

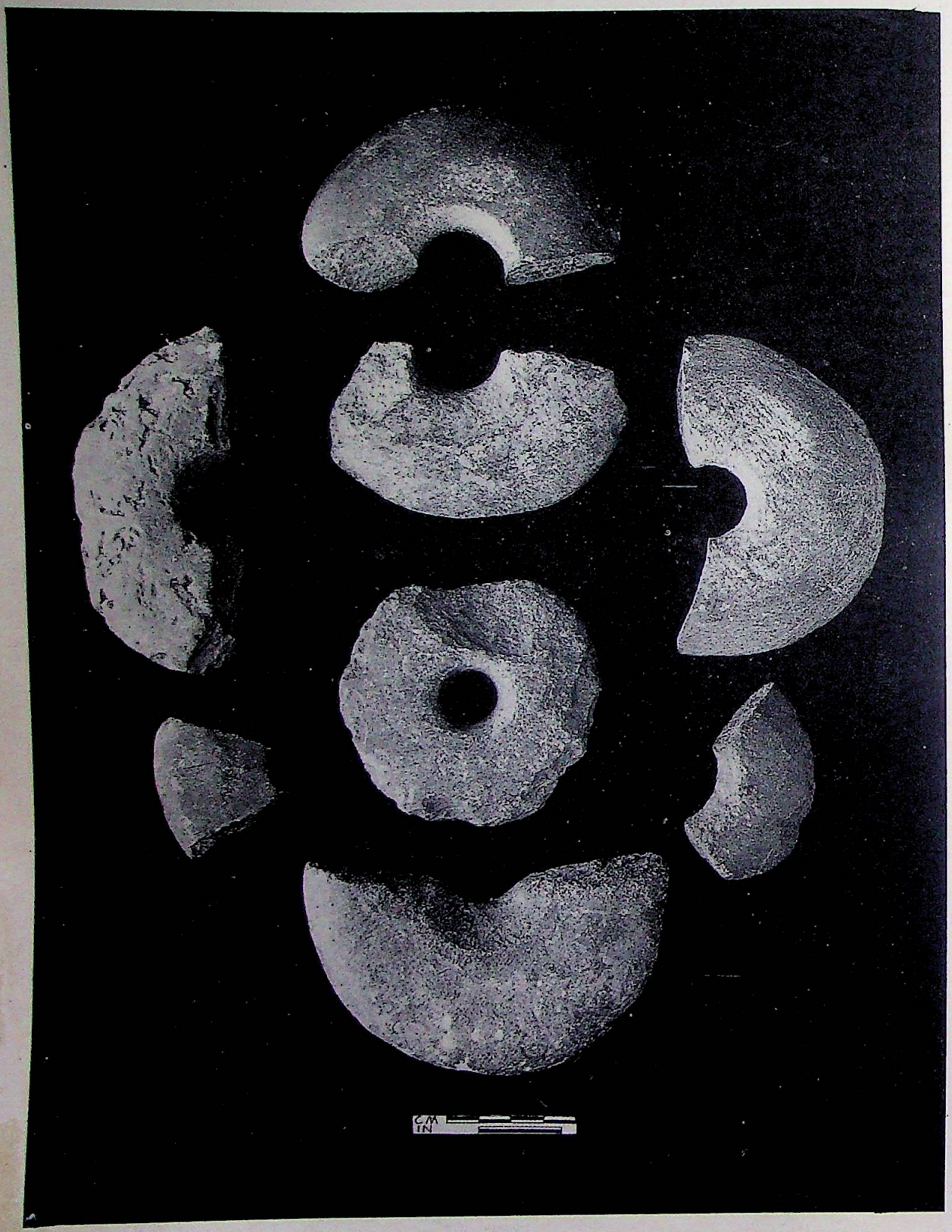
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



11. Another view of the pit chamber and the floor levels sealing it from Burzahom,

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

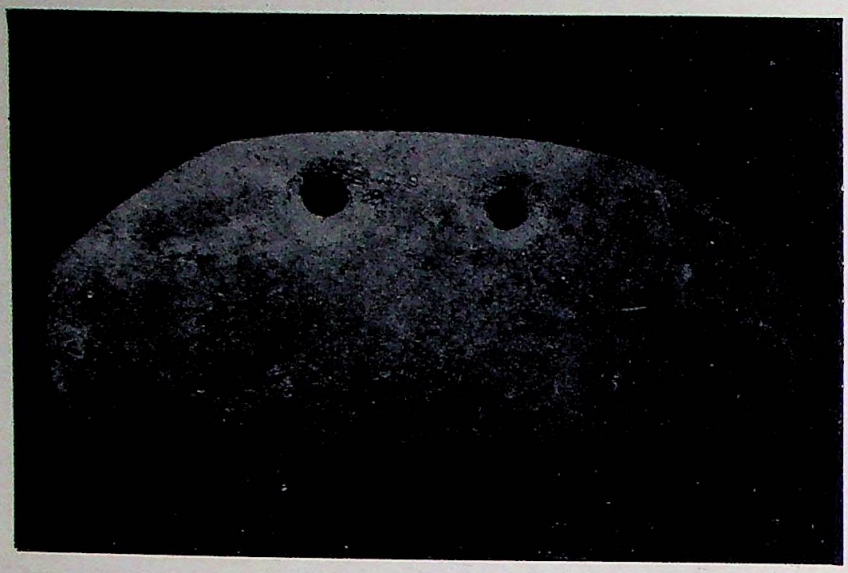


12. Mace-heads from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

13. Stone axes from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



14 (a). Rectangular perforated stone harvester from China,

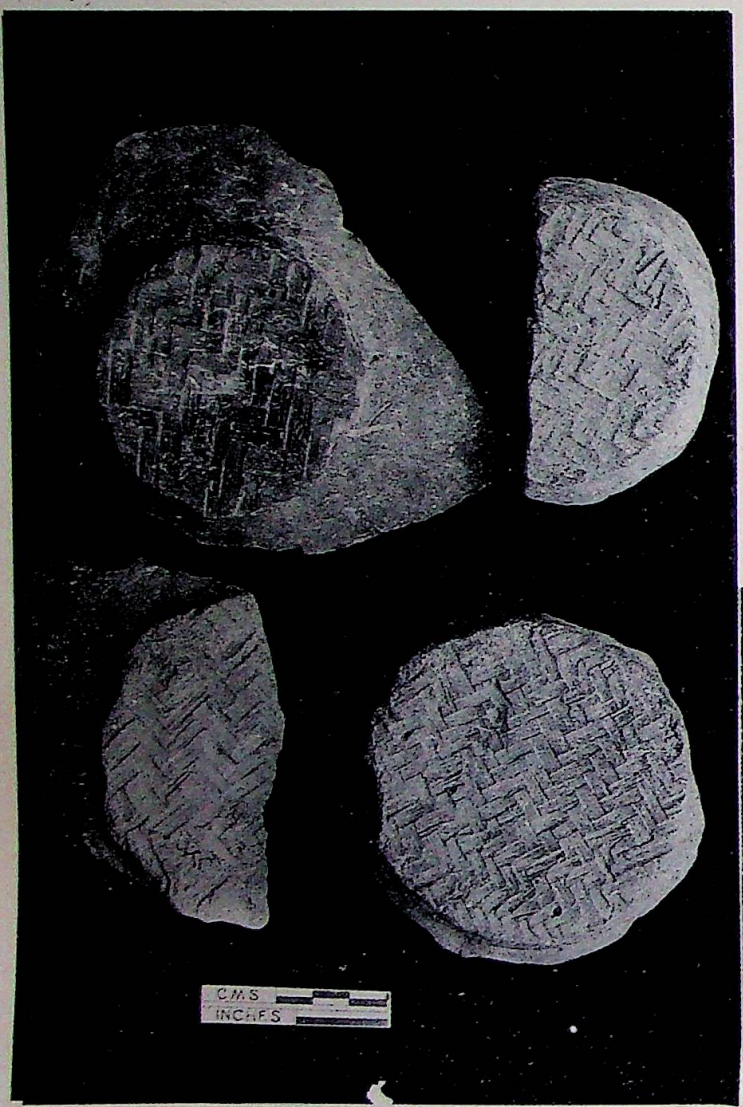
14 (b). bone harvester from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection Digitization by eGangotri

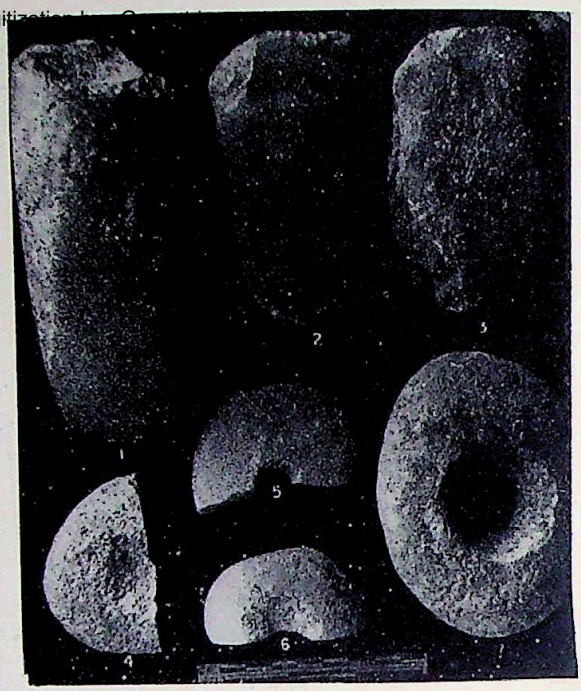
15. Bone tools from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

16. Human skeleton with a child from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

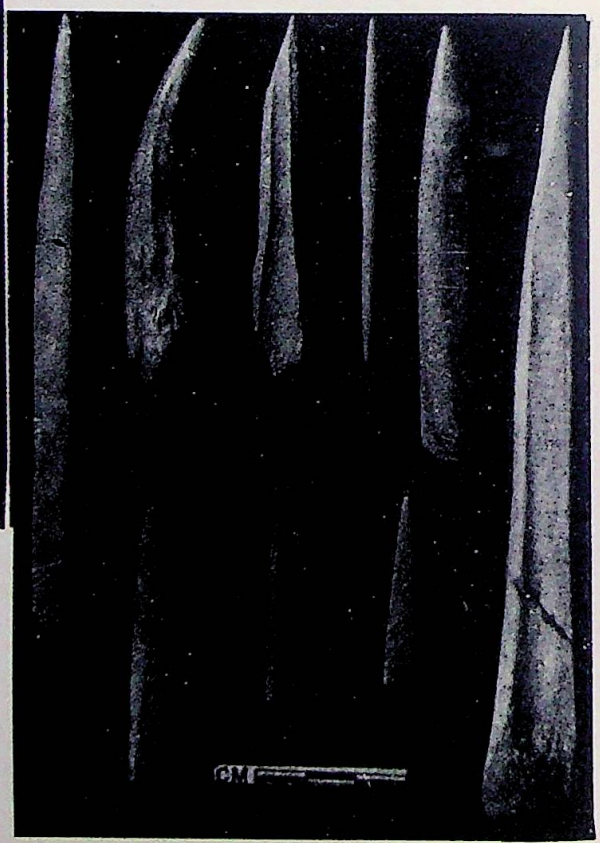
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by Google



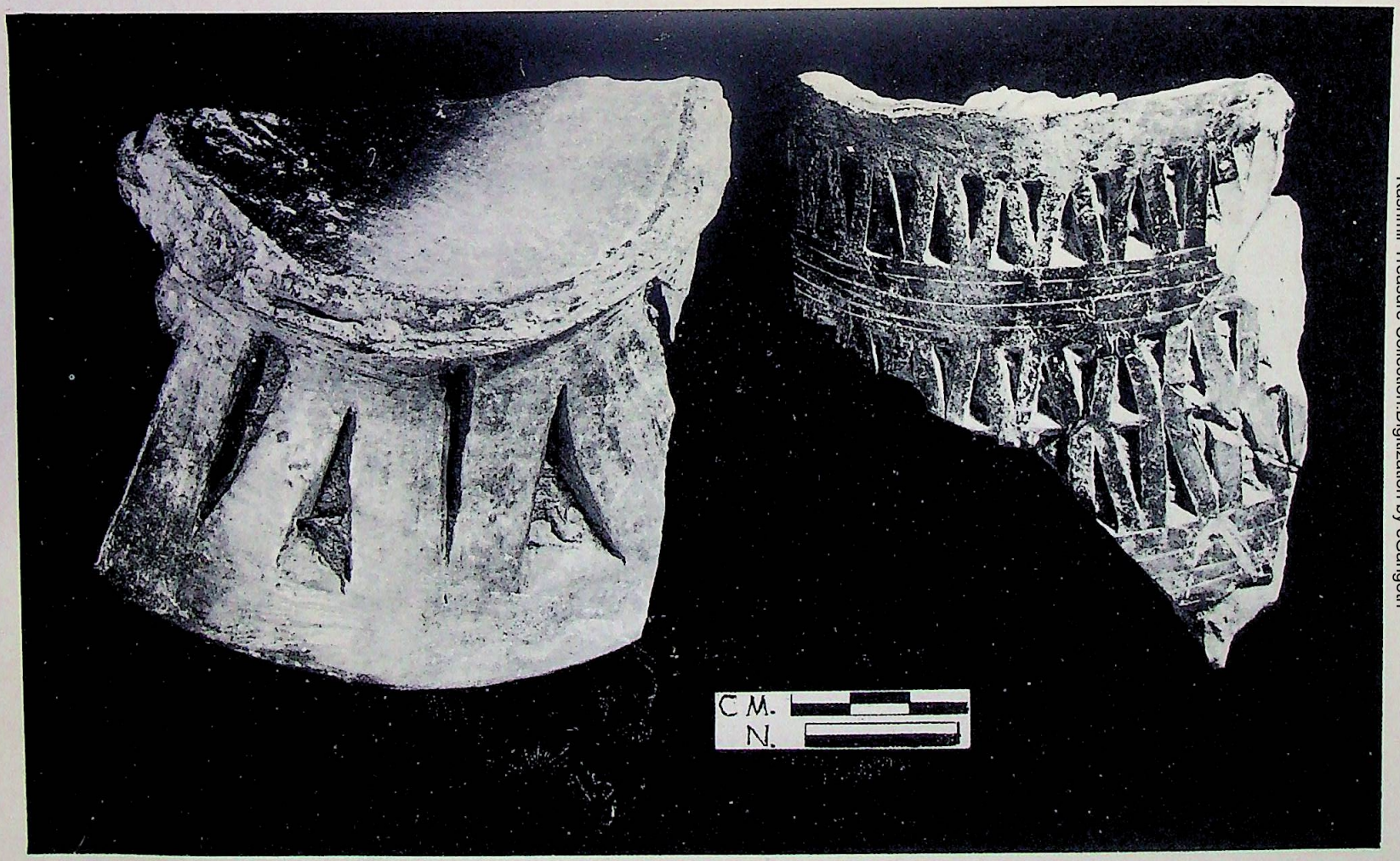
17. Mat impressions on the bases of pottery from Burzahom, district Srinagar.



18. Stone celts and mace-heads from Gufkral, district Pulwama.

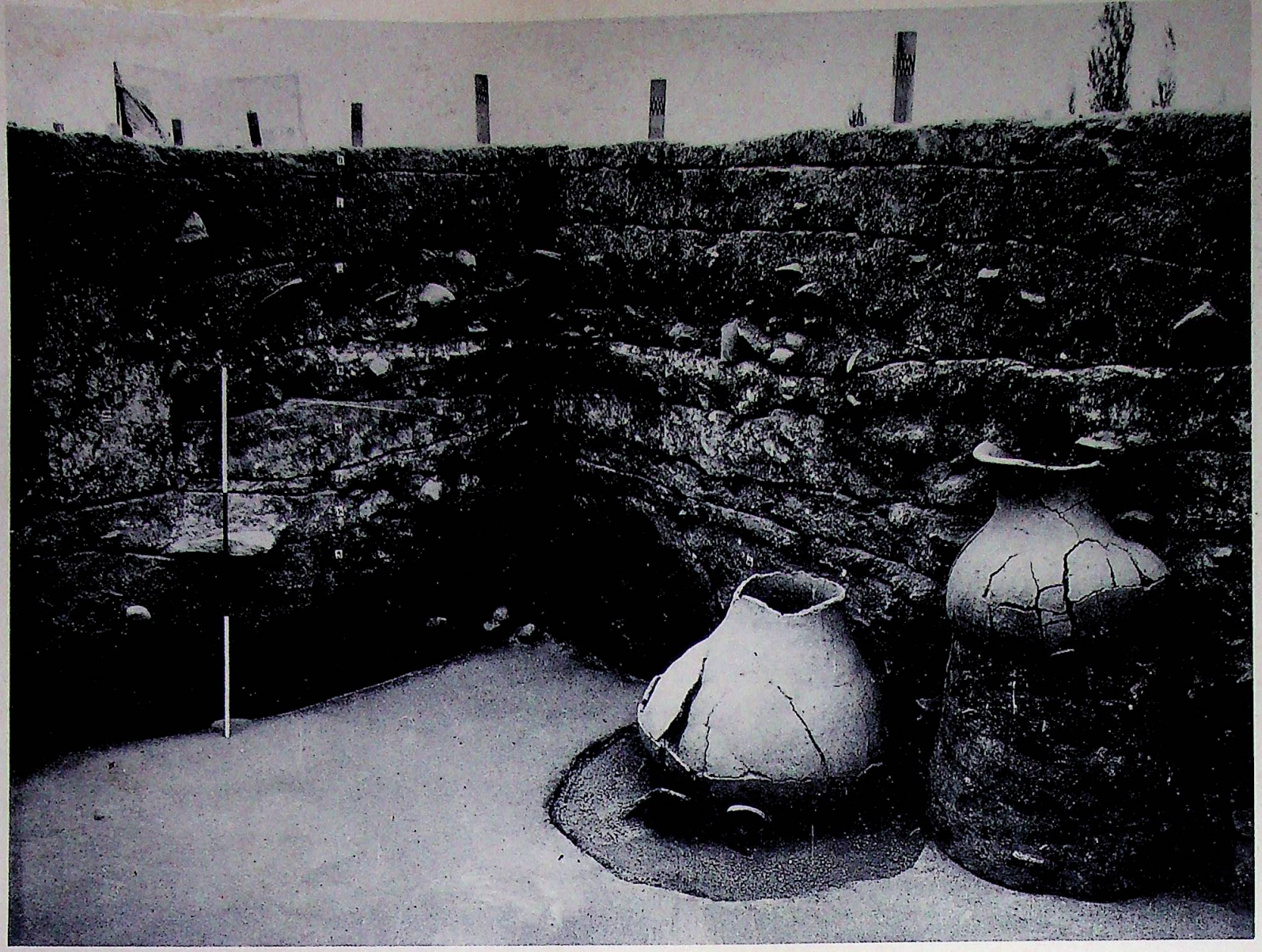


19. Bone tools from Gufkral, district Pulwama.



20. Burnished ware: Dish-on-stand type from Kuladur (Pattan), district Baramulla.

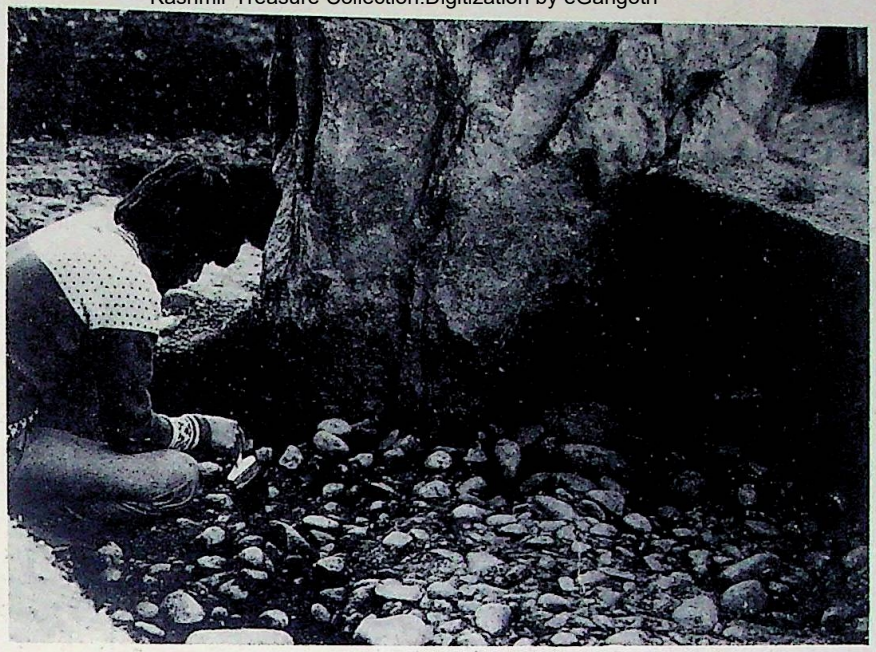
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



21. Gritty red ware pots of a megalithic period from Burzahom, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

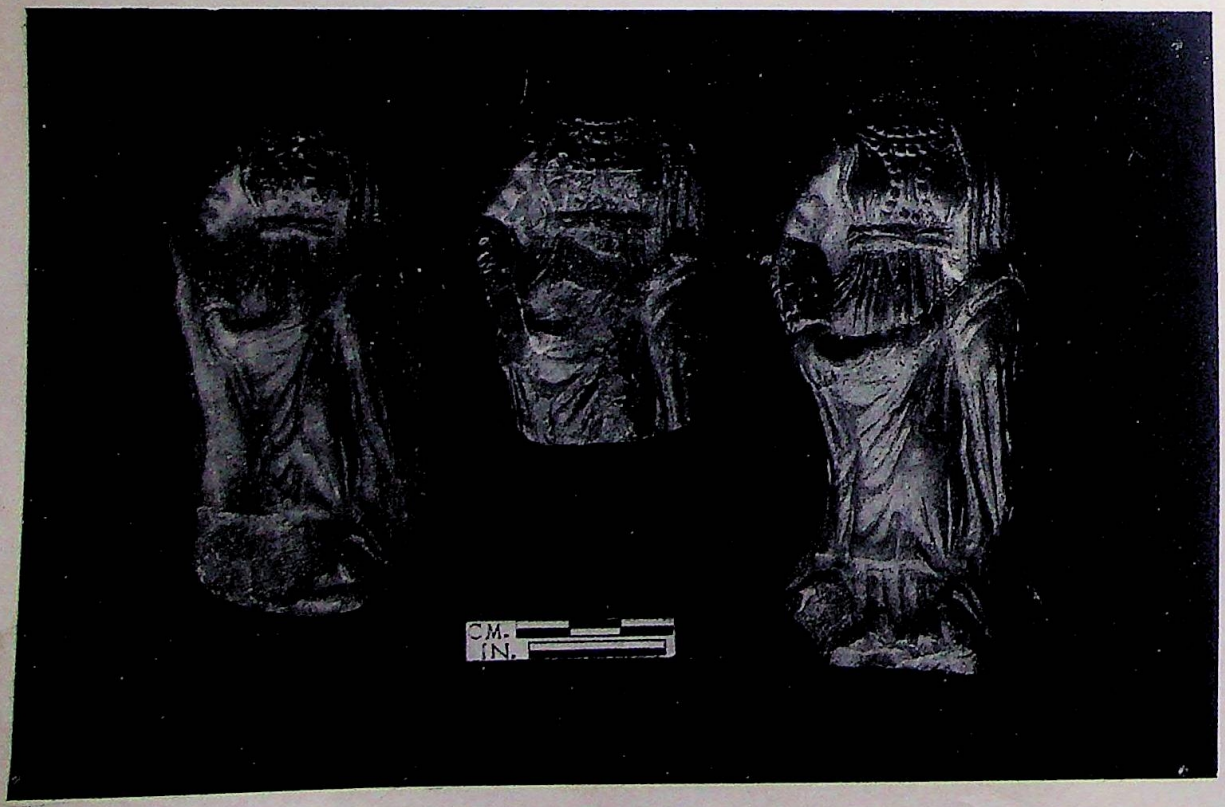


22. Excavated bottom of a standing megalith at Dadsar near Gufkral, district Pulwama.

23. Standing megalith at Waztal, district Anantnag.

Kashmir Treasure Collection Digitization by eGangotri

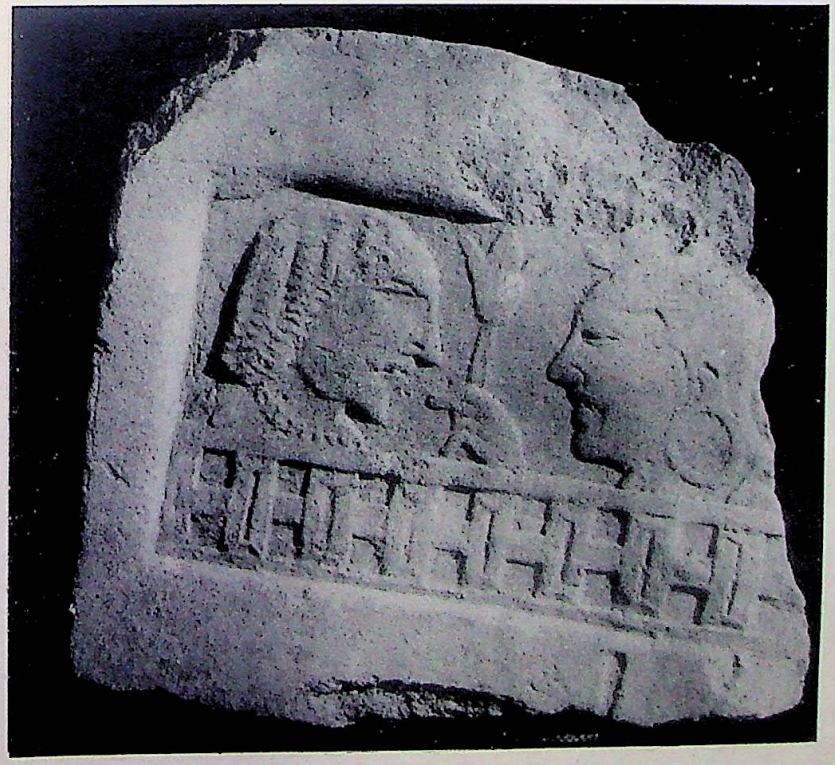
24. Inscription on a pot sherd from Semthan (Bijibehara), district Anantnag.



25. Terracottas from Semthan (Bijibehara), district Anantnag.

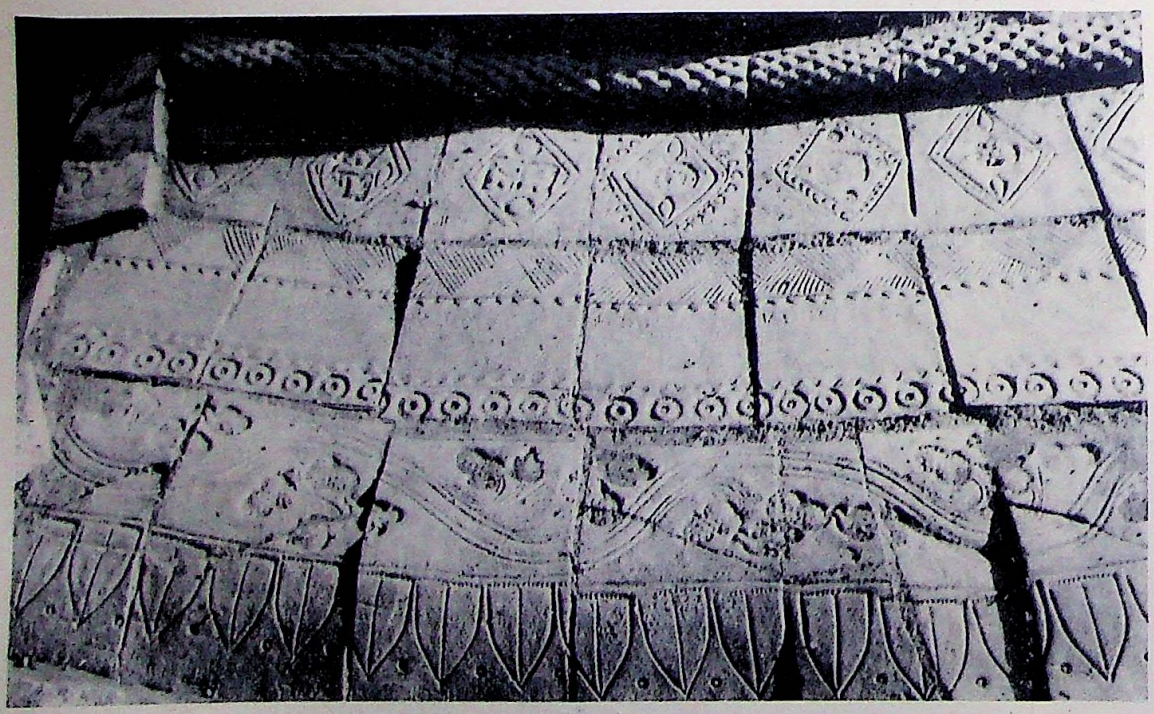
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

26. Terracotta plaque showing a dancing woman from Harwan, district Srinagar.



27. A couple in the balcony from Harwan, district Srinagar (A similar motif may be

28. Terracotta pavement of the compound and emaciated monks at the background from Harwan, district Srinagar.

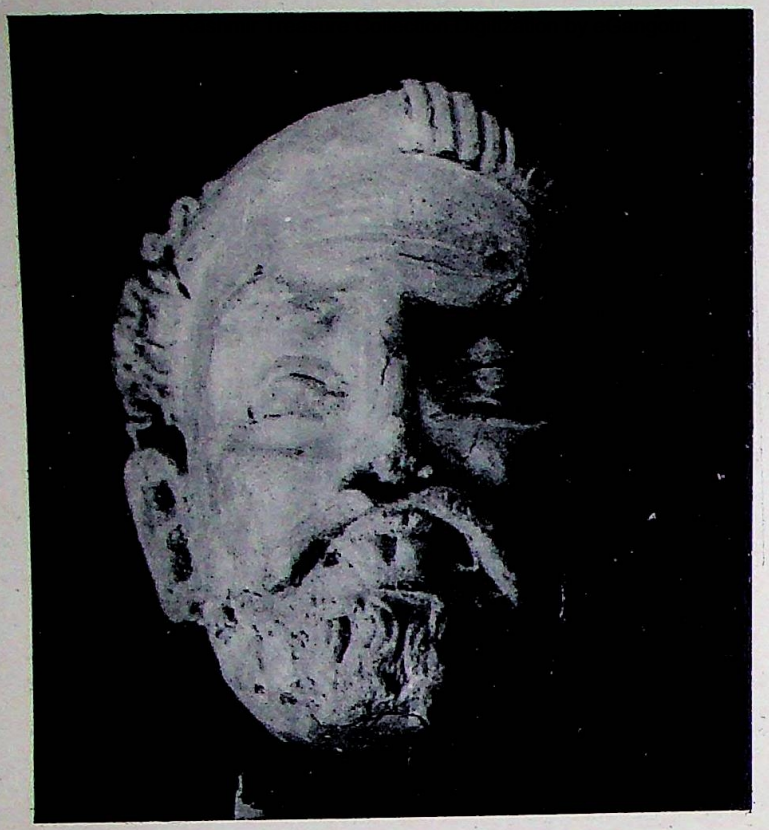


29. Motifs of birds, dots, grapes, scrolls, petals etc on a moulded tile, from recently excavated site Huthmura, ancient Shaktamatha (Darad-kot) on Mattan-Pahalgam road, district Anantnag (courtsey: Shri M.H. Makhdoomi, Asstt. Director, Archaeology and Museum, J & K Govt.).

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

30. A woman in the mood of taking wine and an intoxicated woman at the balcony from Kushana site, Sanghol, district Ludhiana (Punjab).

31. A dancer with a water-filled jar on the raised left elbow and the young couple looking from the balcony from Kushana site, Sanghol, district Ludhiana (Punjab).



32. Terracotta head of an ascetic from Ushkur, district Baramulla.

33. Terracotta head of Buddha from Ushkur, district Baramulla.

34. Lady worshipper from Ushkur, district Baramulla.

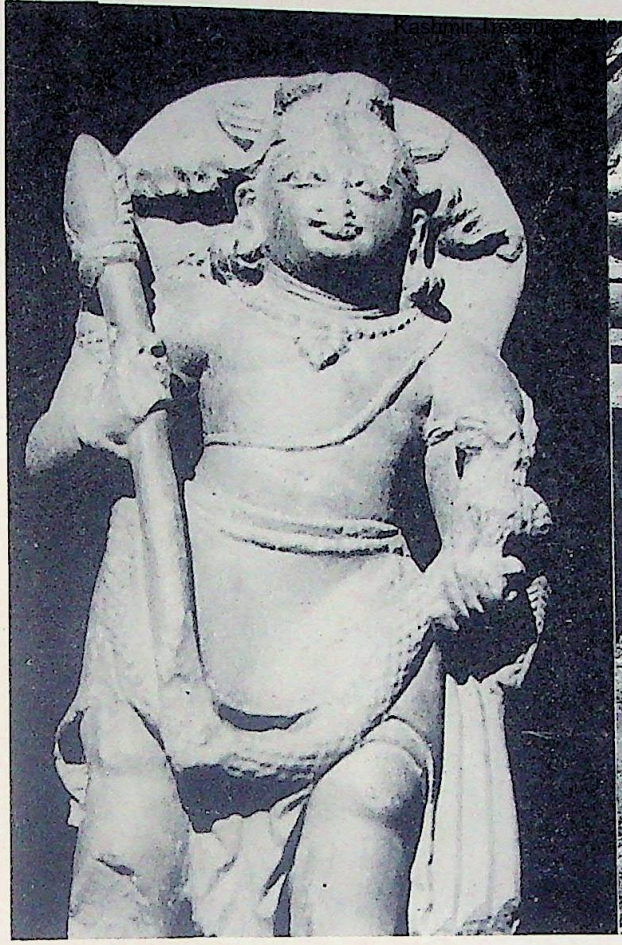
35. Head of Sadashiva (back side) from Fatehgarh, district Baramulla

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

36. Eastern view of the inner courtyard of the Pratapaswami temple at Tapar, district Baramulla (after excavations).

37. General view of the stair-case of the main gate of the enclosure wall of the Prata-

Kashmir Treasures Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



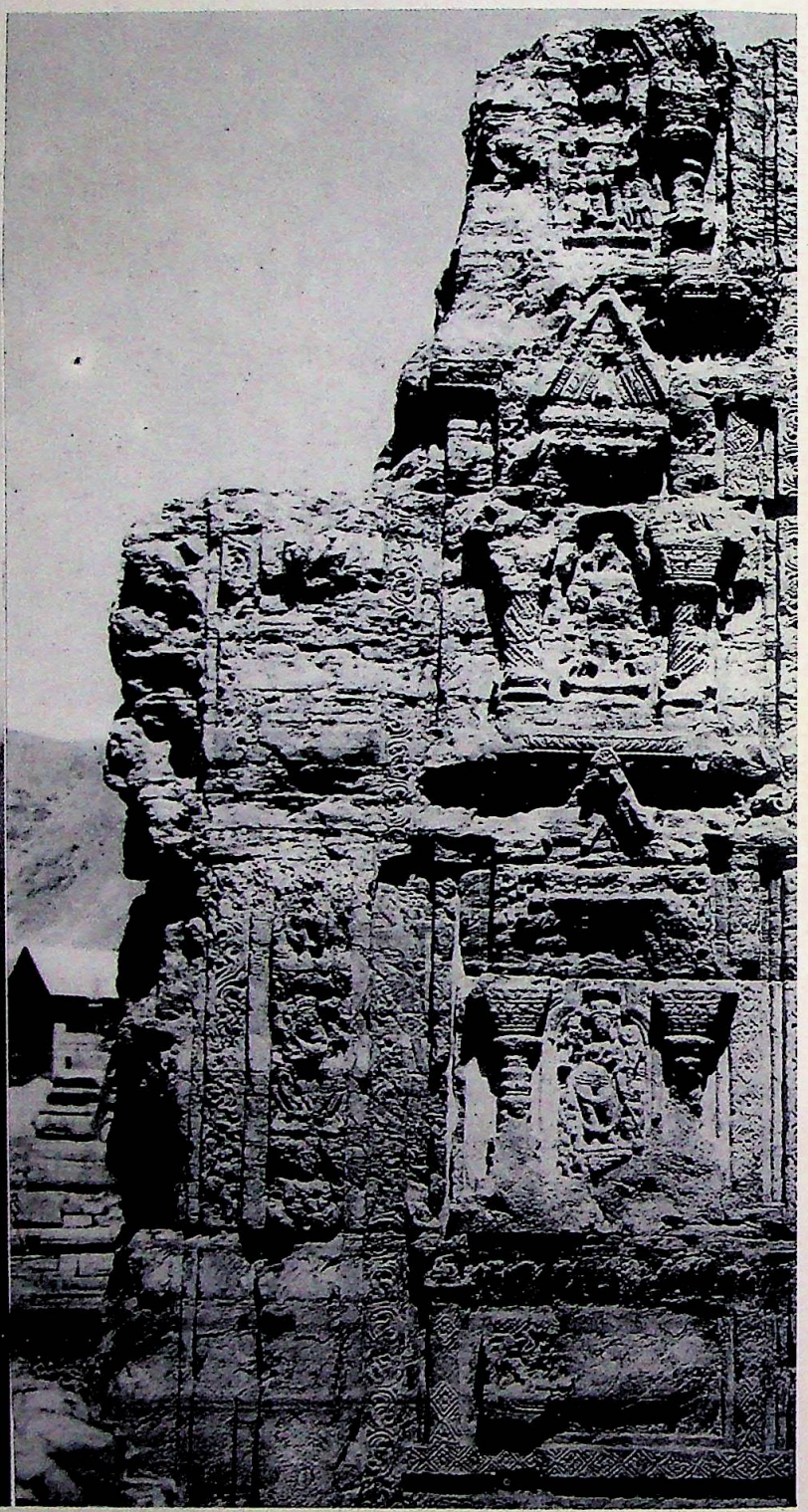
38. Vishnu from Baramulla, district Baramulla (an early specimen).

39. Surya image from Martand, district Srinagar.

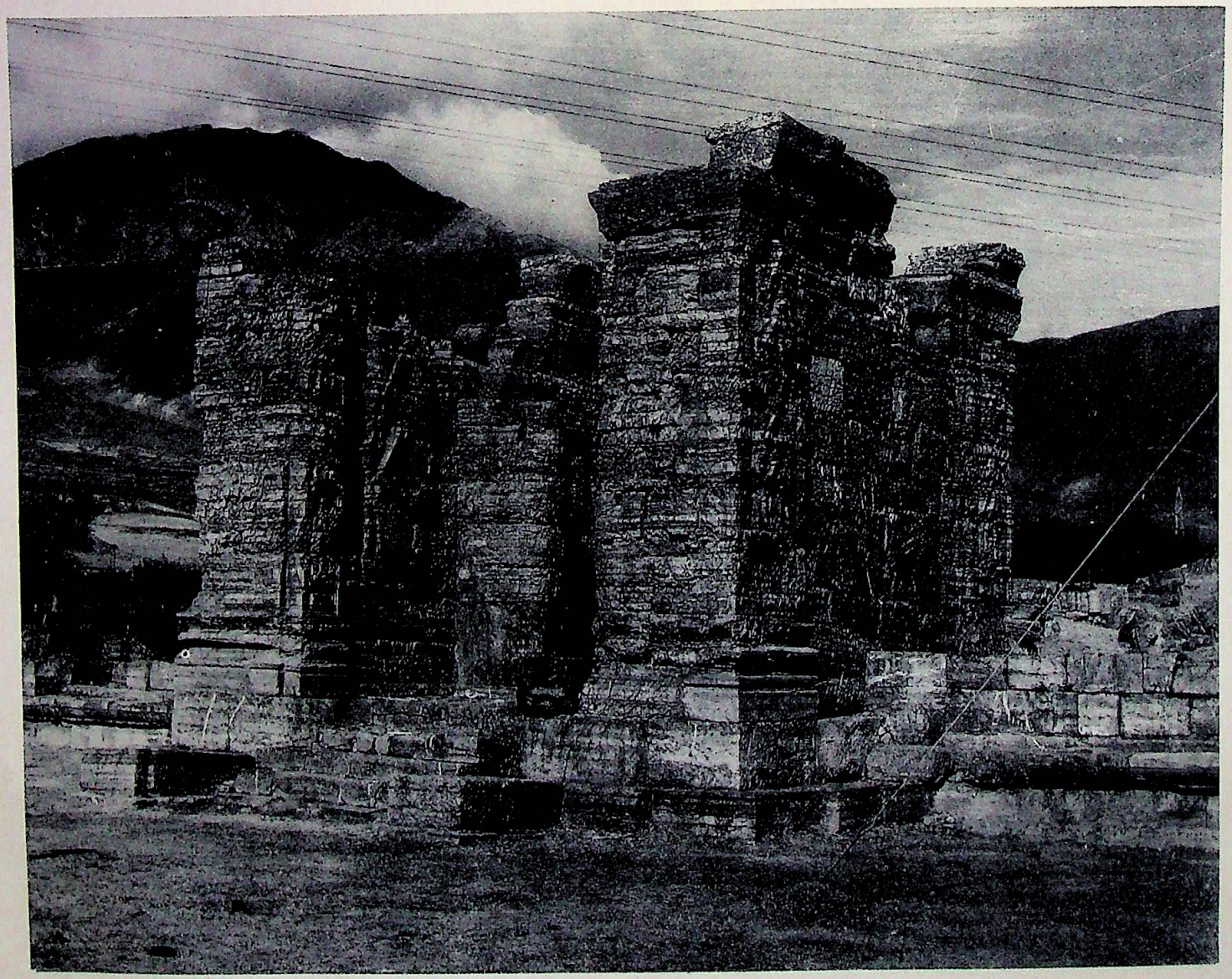
40. View of temple complex, Martand, district Anantnag.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

odhisattva from Parihasapura, district Baramulla



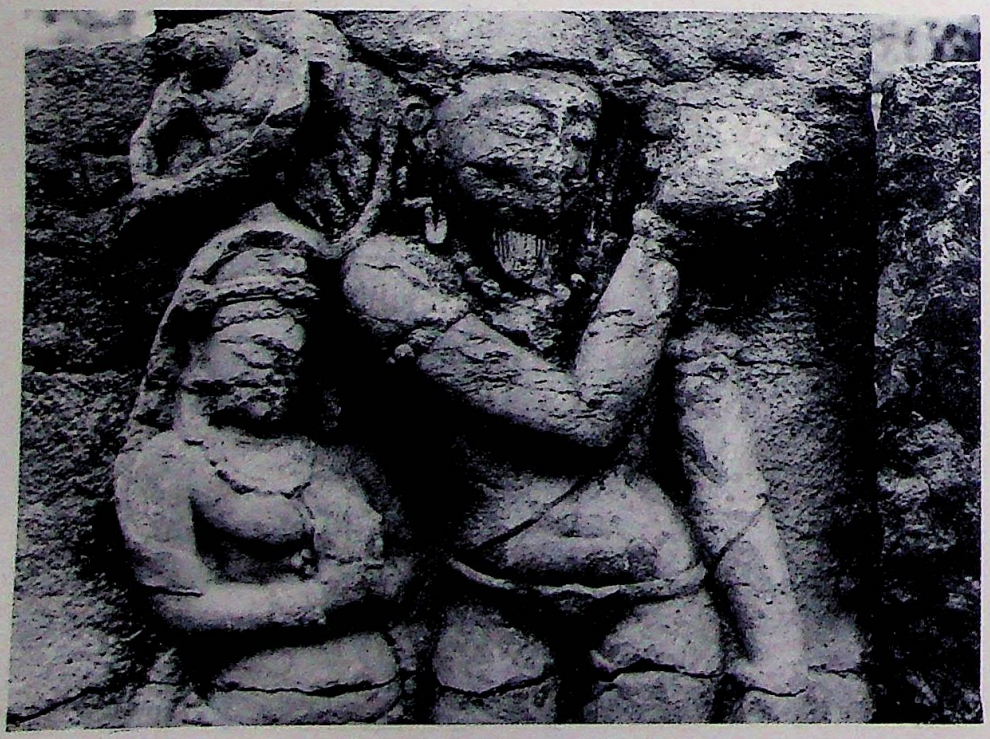
42. Vishnu temple facade at Avantipura, district Anantnag.



43. Shiva temple at Avantipura, district Anantnag.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

44. King and queen (youth) offering prayers at Vishnu temple at Avantipura, district Anantnag.



45. King and queen (old age) offering prayers at Shiva temple at Avantipura, district Anantnag.

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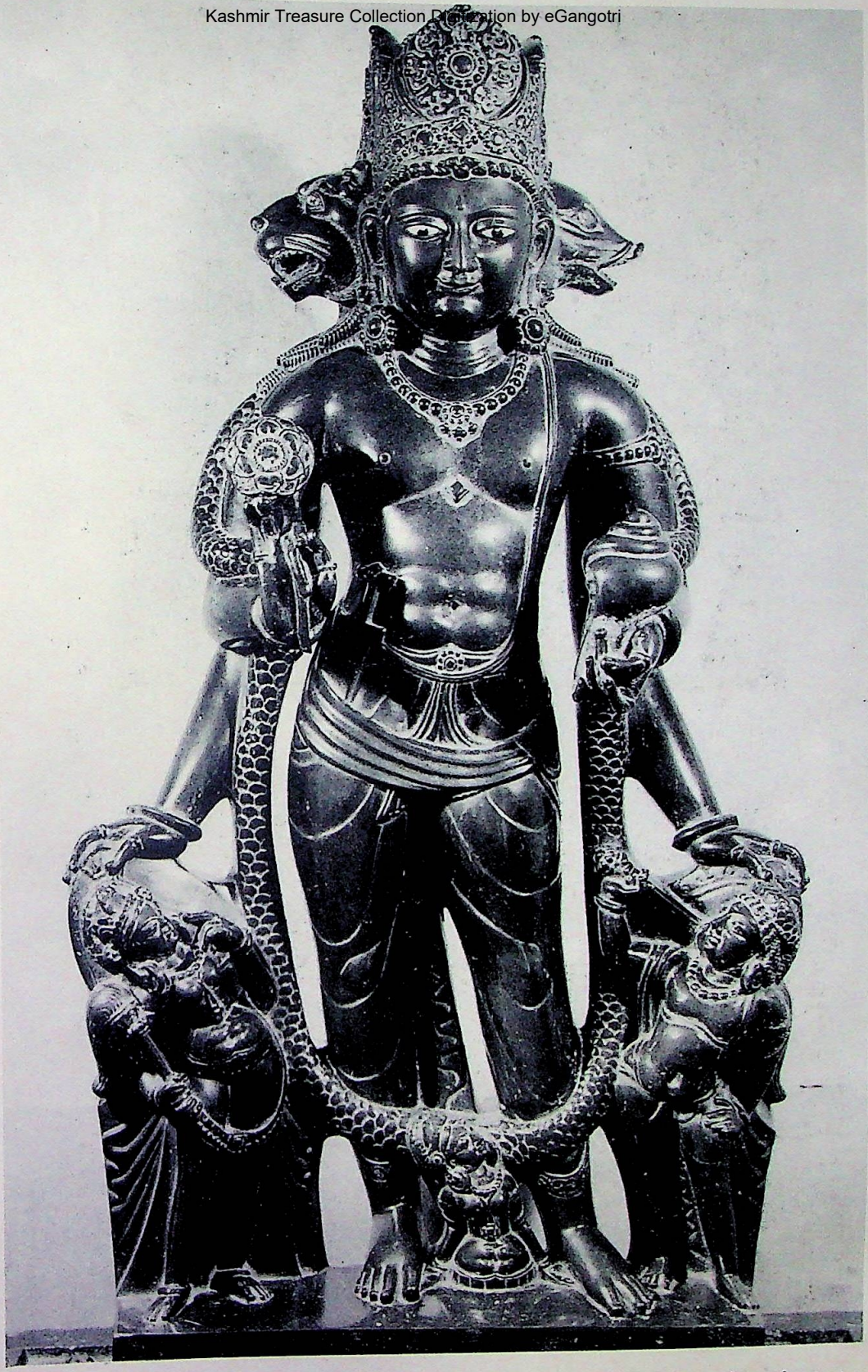
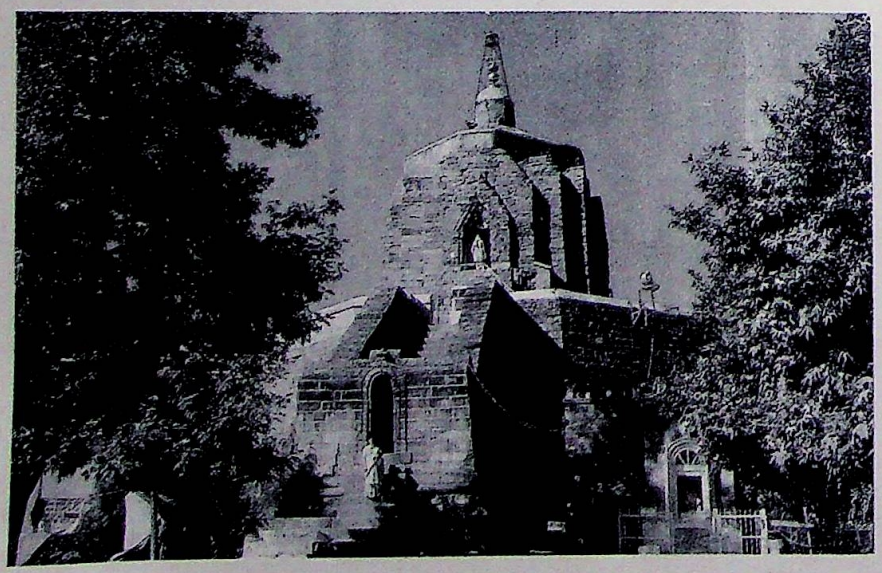


46. Four-faced Vishnu from Avantipura, district Anantnag showing the sculptural art at its zenith (at present in Gadadhar temple, old secretariat, Srinagar).

Kashmir Treasure Collection Digitization by eGangotri

47. Ancient Shiva temple at Payar, district Pulwama.



48. Shankaracharya temple, Srinagar

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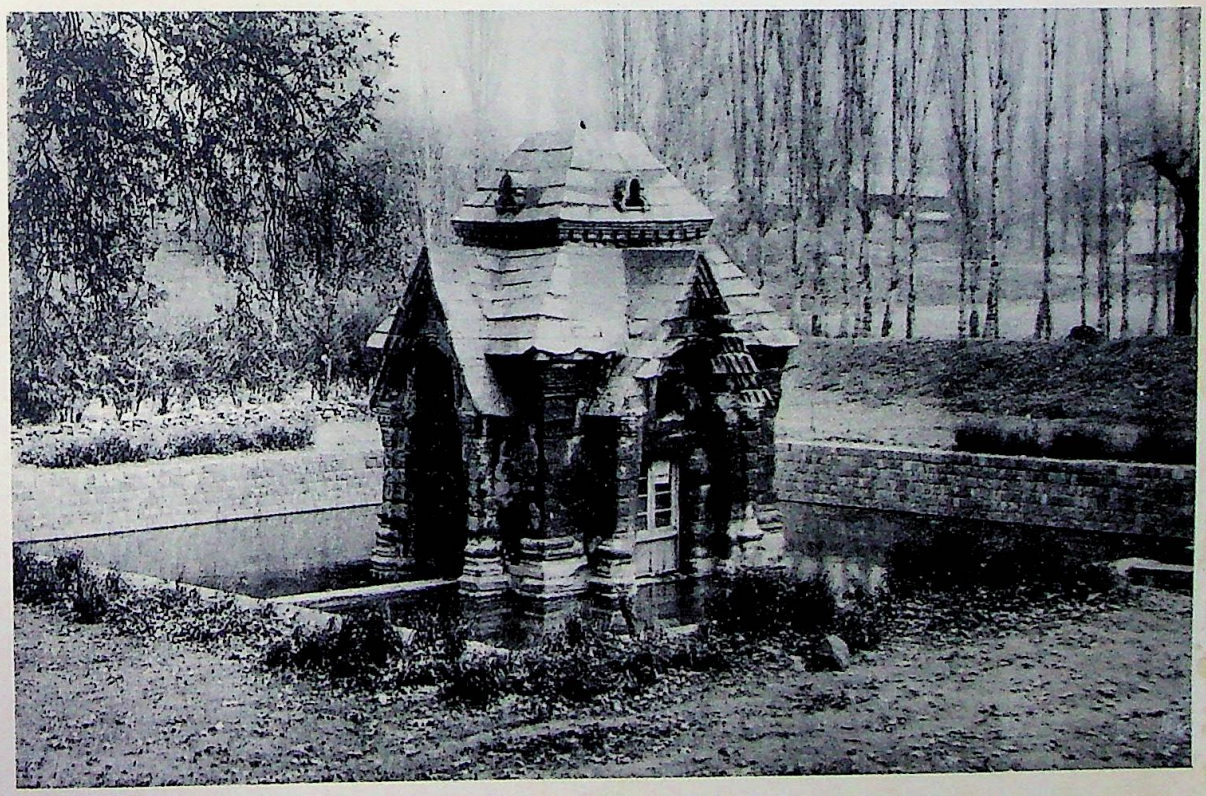
49. Dancing Shiva at ancient temple at Payar, district Pulwama.



50. Ancient temple at Pandrethan, district Srinagar.

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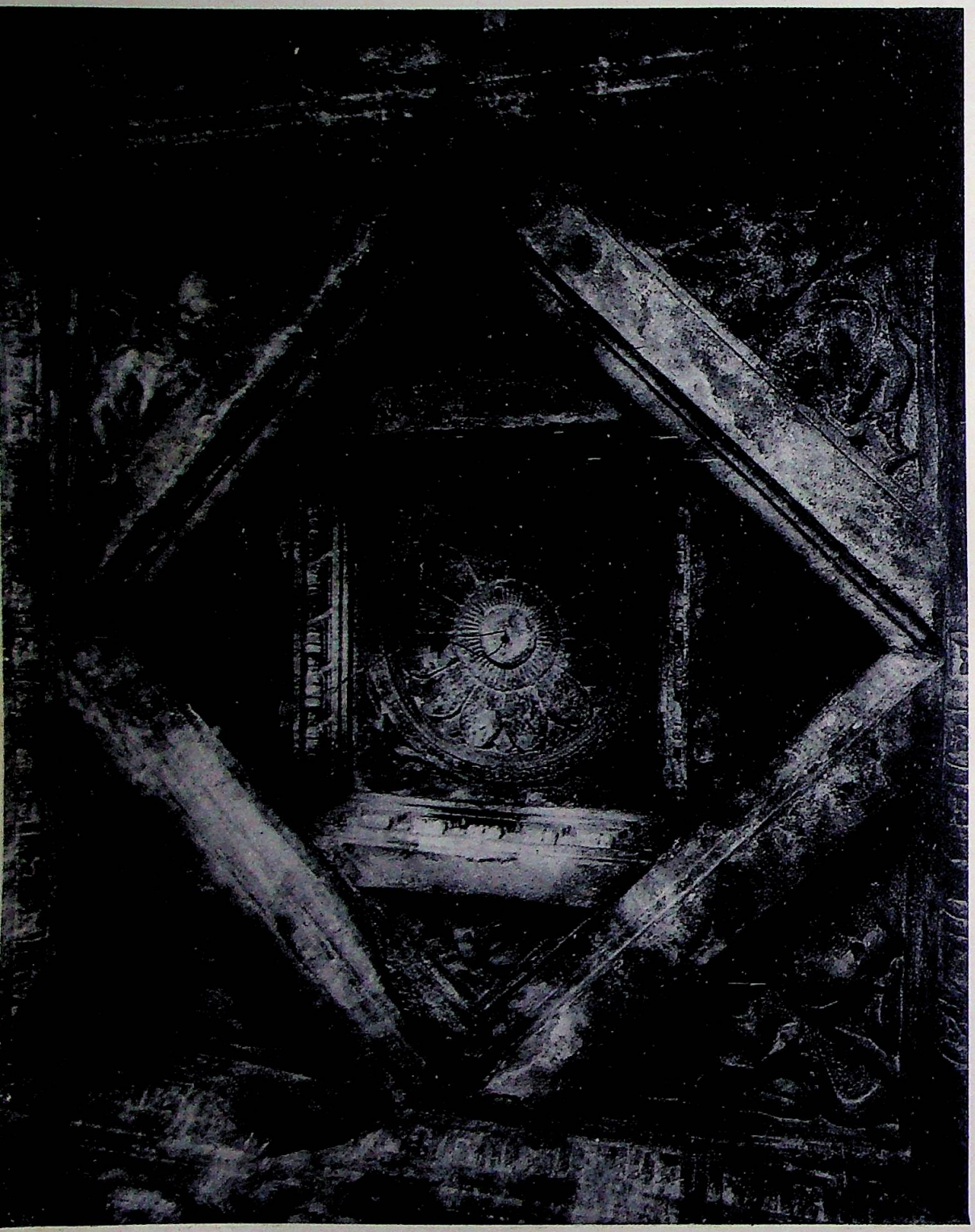
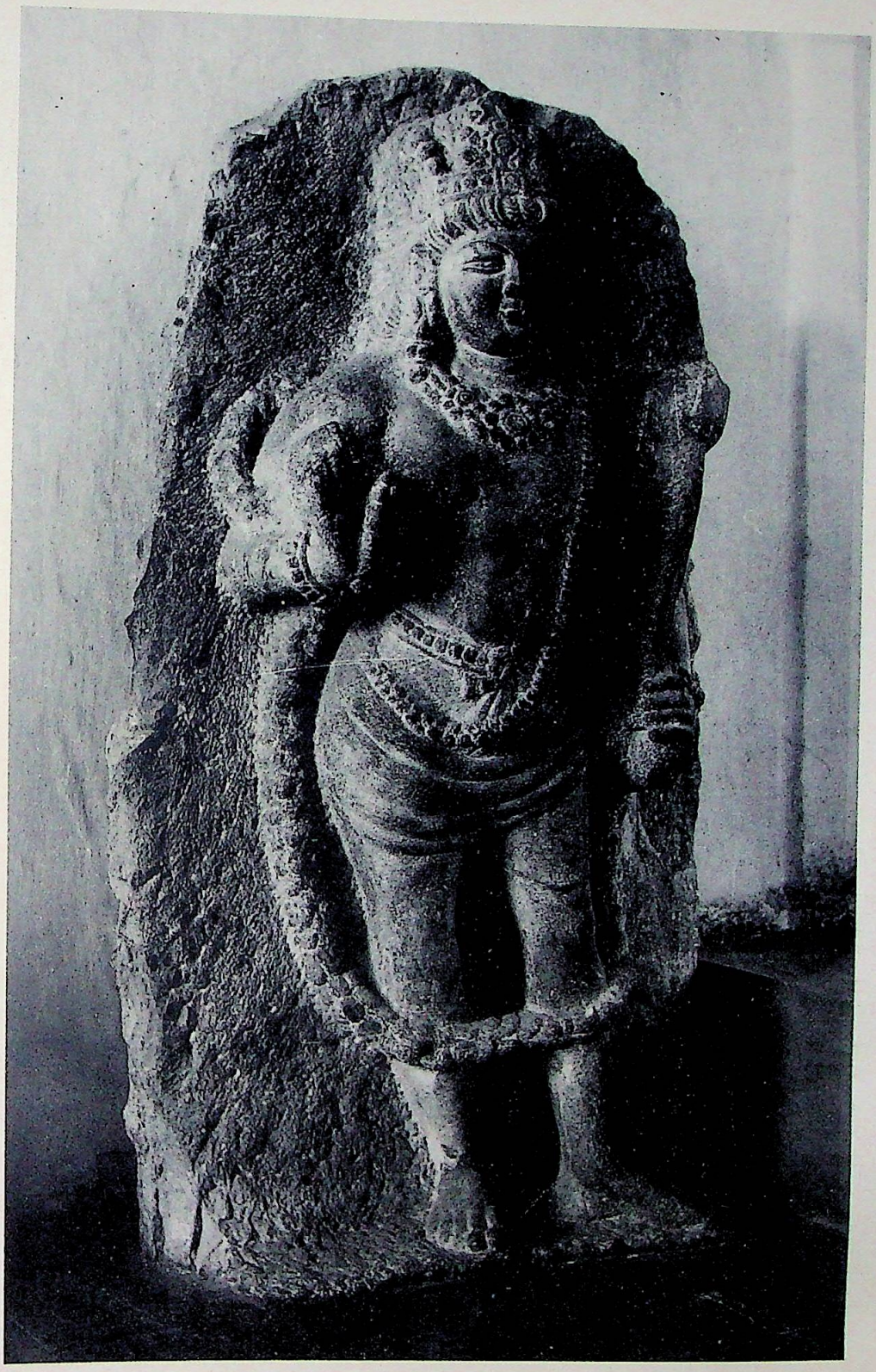


51. Sculptured sealing at ancient temple, Pandrethan, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



52. Standing Avalokiteshvara at Pandrethan, district Srinagar.

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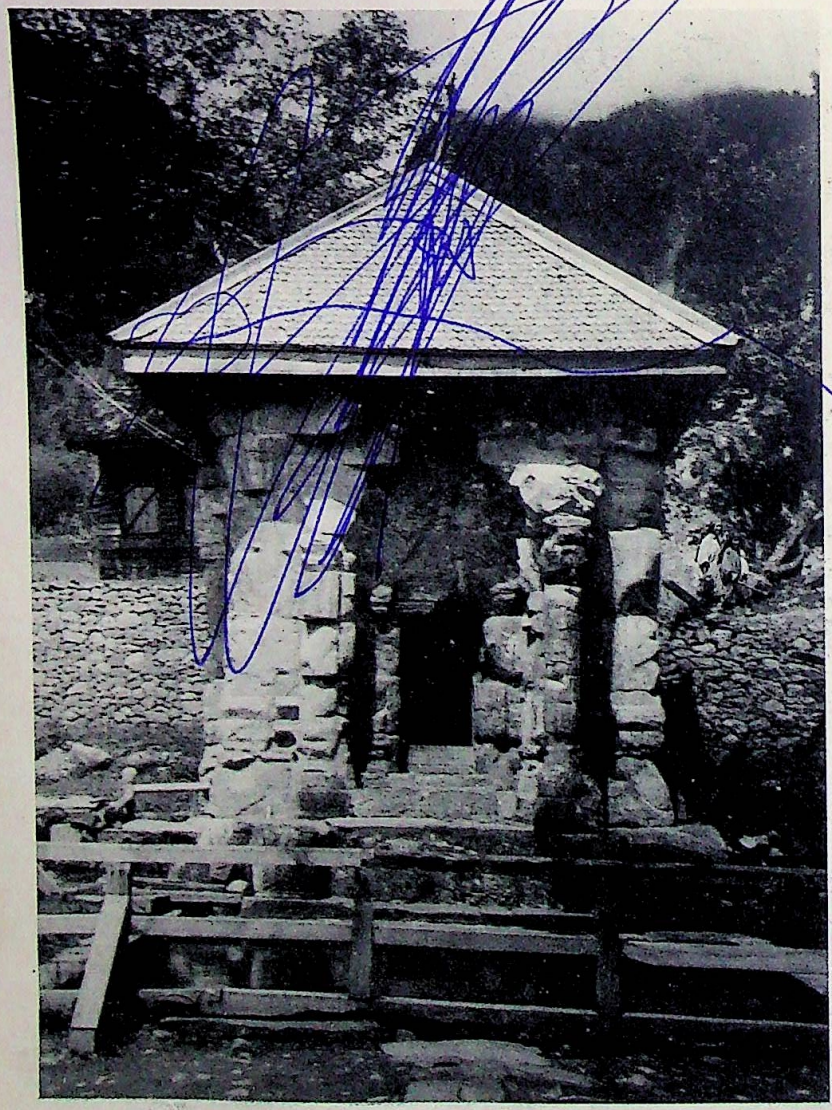
53. Standing goddess Indrani, one of the eight manifestations of Ashtamatrkas at Pandrethan, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

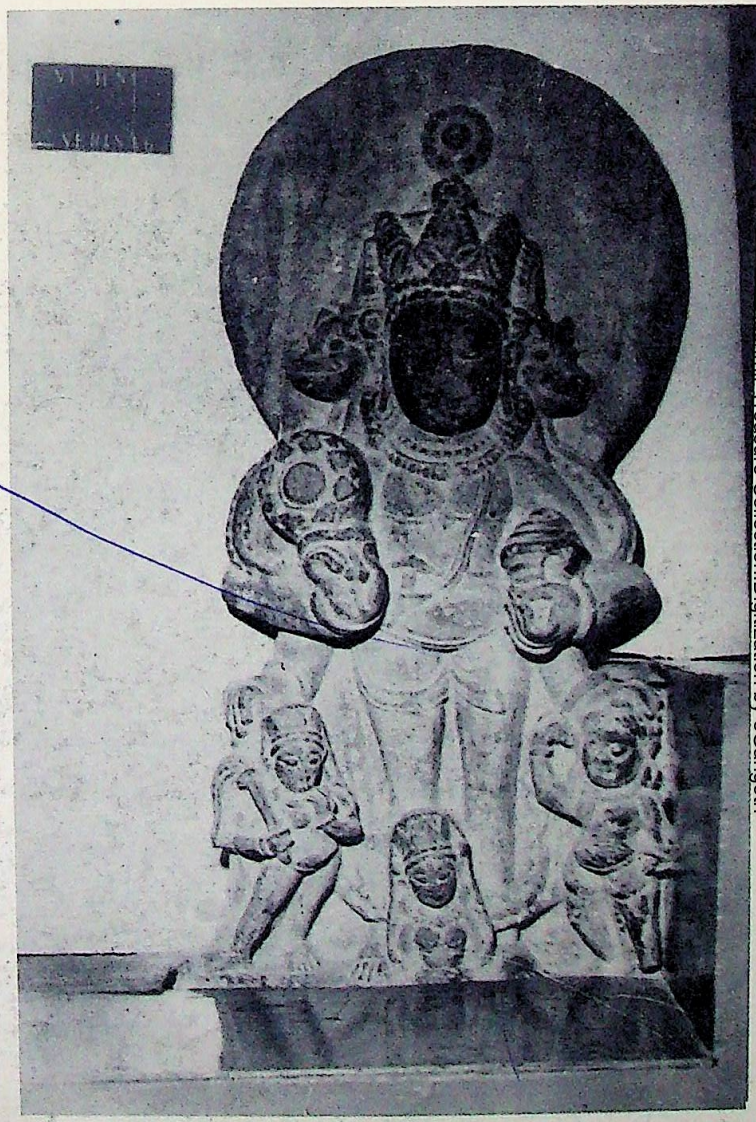
54. Standing Buddha from Pandrethan, district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

55. Inscribed sculpture of Bodhisattva Padampani, Kashmir.



56. Mamaleshwar temple, Pahalgam, district Anantnag. Stone architecture at its fag end



57. Four-faced Vishnu from Verinag showing deterioration in sculptural art.

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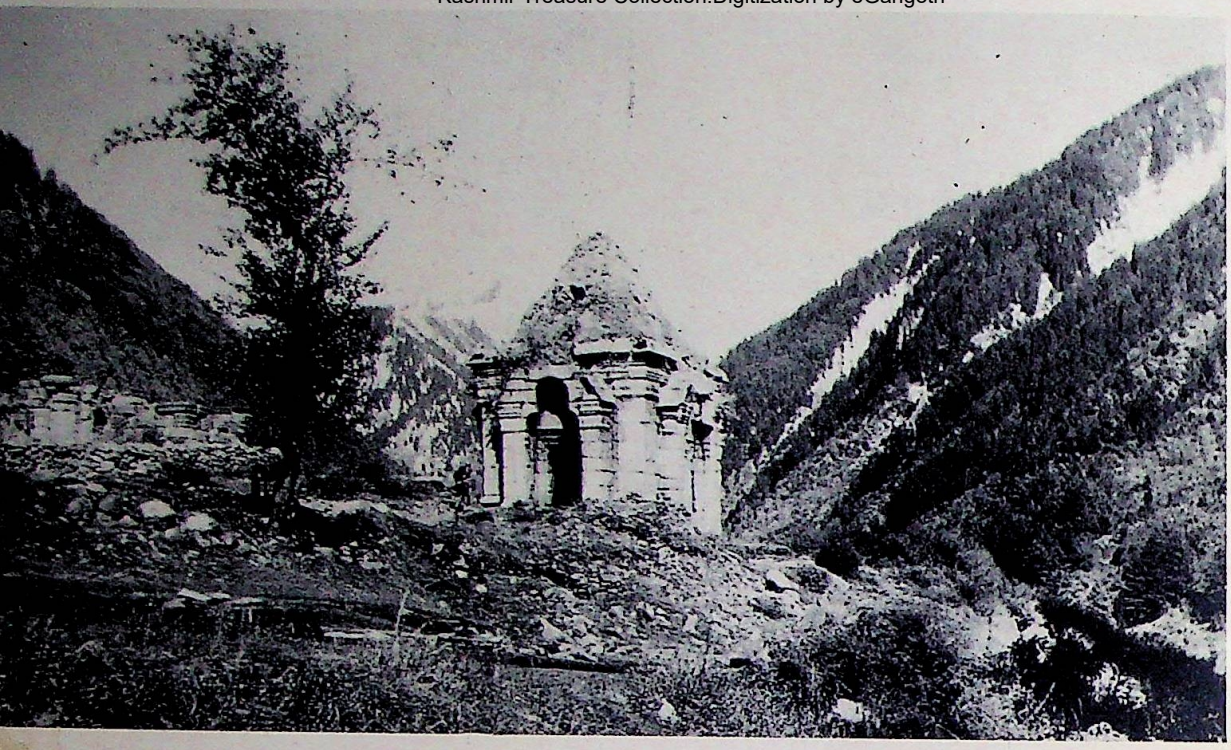
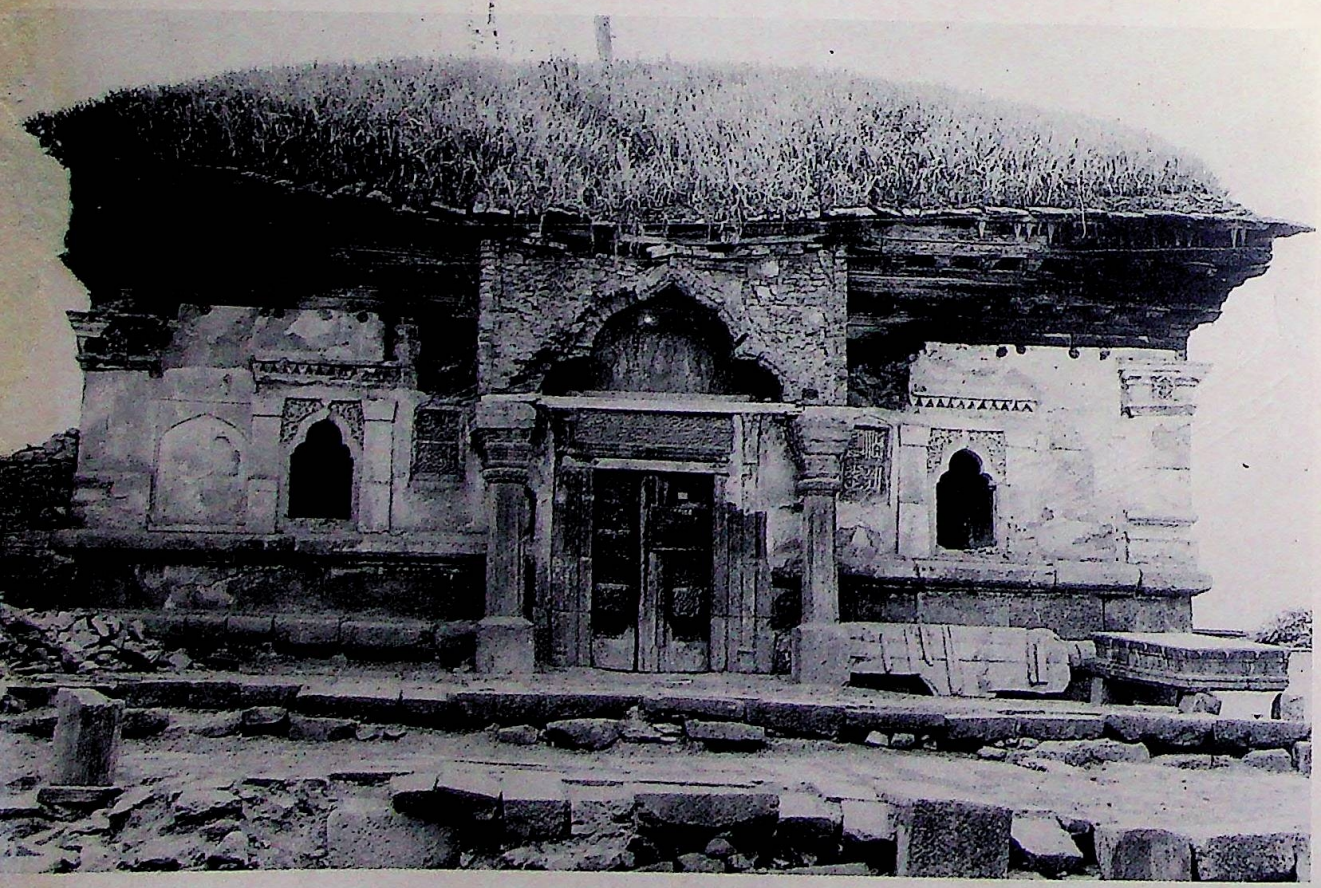
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



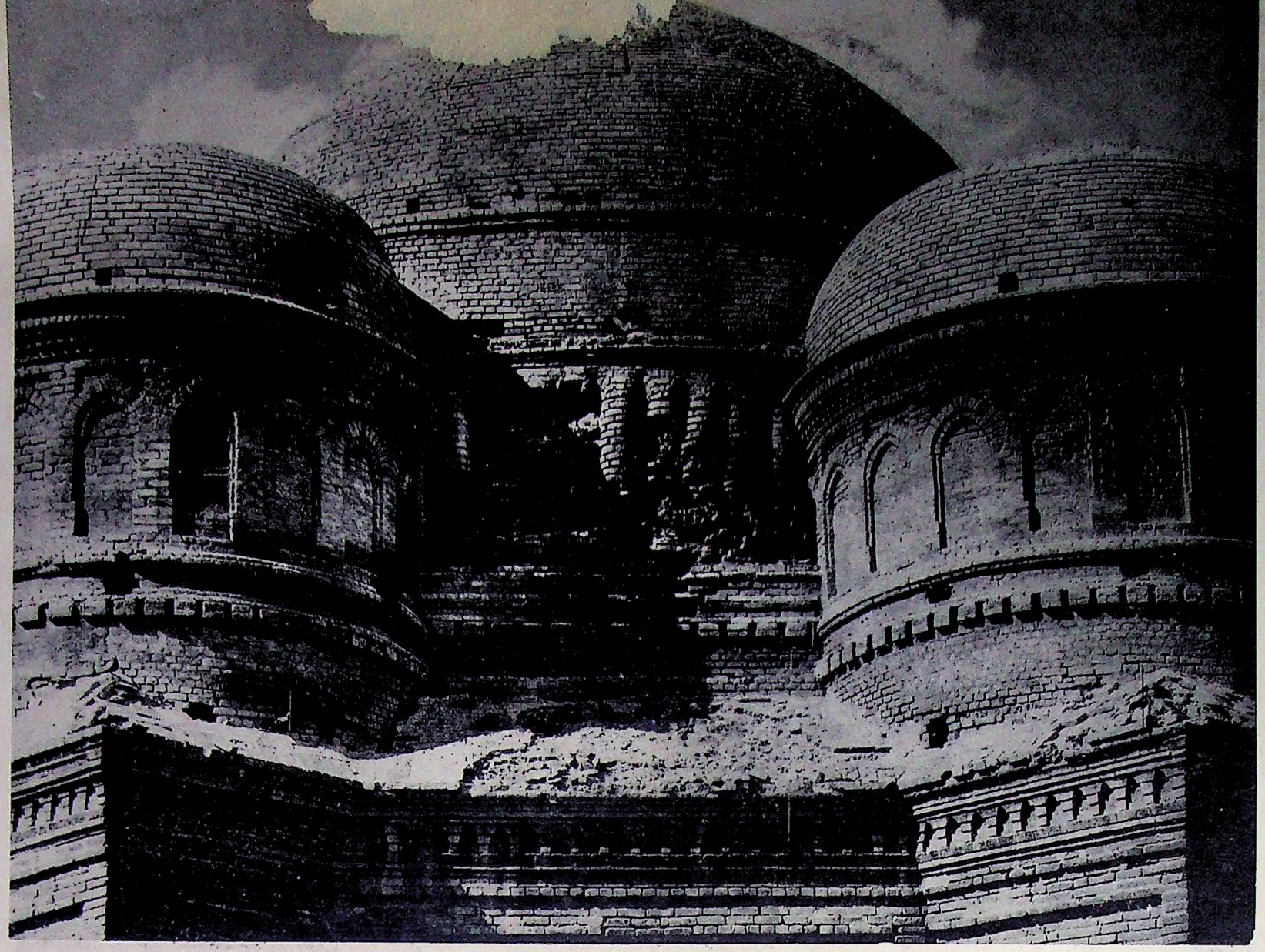
58. An ancient temple at Narannag, district Srinagar.



59. Mosque and tomb of Madin Sahib, district Srinagar.

of Sh[illegible] n[illegible] district Srinagar.

Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri



61. Zain-ul-Abidin's mother's tomb at Srinagar.

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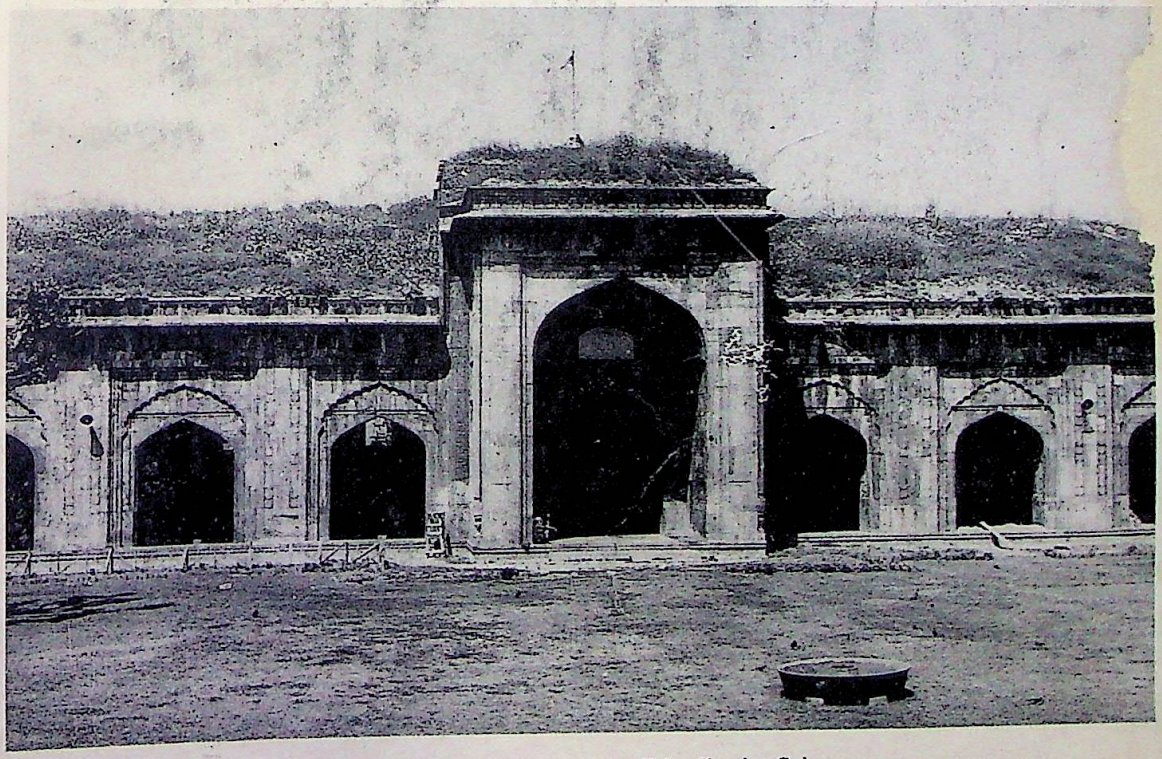
Kashmir Treasure Collection.Digitization by eGangotri

62. Stone gate (Sangeen Darwaza) at Hari Parbat, district Srinagar.



63. Stone mosque (Pathar Masjid), district Srinagar.

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64. Outer compound wall and the main enterance of Pari Mahal, Srinagar.

65. Mughal arcade at Verinag, district Anantnag.

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